

PS 3539

.H659

B6

1909

Copy 1



Class PS 3539

Book .H659B6

Copyright N^o 1909

COPYRIGHT DEPOSIT.

A BOOK OF HOURS

by
Ellen Thompson



New York
THE FOREST PRESS
1909

PS 3539

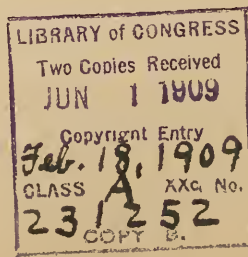
, H659B6

1909

Copyright, 1909, by J. M. Bowles



Printed by the Forest Press, New York



*But Friendship is a nobler thing,—
Of Friendship it is good to sing.
For, truly, when a man shall end,
He lives in memory of his friend.*

THESE papers were selected from Miss Thompson's notes for her "hours," talks on literature given in and about Boston for the last twenty years of her life, and which had come to be, from her large and permanently devoted audiences, one of the instituted charms of culture in the city.

A skilled working love for books is too valuable an influence to let die.

CONTENTS

The Friendliness of Books	I
In Praise of London: Charles Lamb's Letters and Essays	17
Edward Fitzgerald and His Friends in East Anglia	49
Oxford's Walks and Gardens	93
From Lough Neagh to Lough Foyle	133
Some Irish Villages That I Know	178

THE FRIENDLINESS OF BOOKS

ALTHOUGH I were to talk to you long and earnestly on the friendliness of books, I could not sufficiently celebrate their dear friendliness. It is impossible to tell all the joy that comes from the companionship of books—that is something that one must feel.

But I shall like to tell you many reasons why books are dear to me. I cannot remember when books began to be my friends, because I have no memory of learning to read; ever since I can remember books have been my greatest delight.

My education was somewhat like Bridget Elia's, and here at the very threshold of this hour, let me tell you that two of your dearest friends, if you're reading girls, will be Charles and Mary Lamb. If you already know them, you may rest assured that they are your lifelong friends. In the essays which he signs Elia, Charles Lamb always calls his sister "my cousin Bridget," and this is the way he tells us that she read: "Her education in youth was not much

A Book of Hours

attended to; and she happily missed all that female garniture which passeth by the name of accomplishments. She was tumbled early, by accident or design, into a spacious closet of good old English reading, without much selection or prohibition, and browsed at will upon that fair and wholesome pasturage. Had I twenty girls, they should be brought up exactly in this fashion. I know not whether their chances in wedlock might be diminished by it; but I can answer for it, that it makes (if the worst comes to the worst) most incomparable old maids."

In my youth, I was tumbled into a closet of good English reading, and it was my chief delight. So much is it my habit and my pleasure to read, that when I enter a room, the first thing for which my eye instinctively looks is a book. I don't like to sleep in a room where there are no books. In my own room, I open my eyes every morning to my friends on the shelves, hundreds of them, and say, "There you are, old friends," and I like to fancy they are not insensible to my greeting.

When I have a house of my own, it is to consist principally of one large room, which shall be living room, dining room and library. I quite

The Friendliness of Books

know how it will be furnished—long low book-cases and leaded windows above, a big, big fireplace, and when my friends visit me, we shall sit at table and chat about books and book-folk, and when playful controversies arise about this or that, we shall immediately refer to the books to the right or left of us, so you see formal parties will be quite out of the question in my house, but we shall sit and talk as at a feast. That is what I believe most talk should be—a kind of feast.

It happens that I do not live permanently in any place, and some might say that I have no home, but my home is where my books are, and when I am withdrawn from my books, I think back to them as to the home to which I shall return.

Once, after a long tarry abroad, when I returned to the room which was then my home, there was no person to welcome me save the very kindly housemaid. She—and I remember this so gratefully after all these years—had put flowers in my room, and as I stood looking lovingly at the backs of the books, and caressing one and then another, she said, "Your books creak on their shelves to welcome you back." I liked the conceit of that. They do welcome

A Book of Hours

me back, and they speed my going, too, because from my reading my books, I am much better able to enjoy the countries where the makers of English literature have lived. And I would like to illustrate to you just that point—how much more meaningful England is to me because of the reading of its literature that I have done.

Thackeray says: "To be the most beloved of English writers, what a title that is for a man!" He says it of Goldsmith whom I love, and I love Thackeray, too, but, to me, without question, the best beloved of English writers is Charles Lamb—"Saint Charles," Thackeray called him once. He didn't write the most profound books, but his essays are so full of his love for humanity, his love for his books, and they are written in a style so exquisite, that one must have joy in them.

Not only do I care for Lamb, but I have much regard for those that love him, and very little for those who temper their enthusiasm respecting him. It gives me pleasure to know that in some minor ways I am like Lamb. He says: "I am a bundle of prejudices, made up of likings and dislikings, the veriest thrall to sympathies, apathies, antipathies."

The Friendliness of Books

So, years ago, when Mr. Frederick Harrison in a very much read article, "On the Choice of Books," said, "Poor Lamb has a great deal to answer for," I permitted myself to dislike Mr. Harrison, and for years I cherished anything but kindly feelings for him. Then, some years ago at Oxford, he delivered an essay on "Style," and in the course of it he said that Charles Lamb and Thackeray came nearest the great French stylists in purity of diction, in grace, and in all the essentials of fine writing. Then I found my ill-feeling toward Mr. Harrison disappearing, and ever since then I have had pleasant sentiments toward him.

I care for him so much that I always have a feeling of pleasant comradeship for anyone that writes appreciatively of Lamb. It is no hyperbolic statement for me to say that he is one of my best-loved friends, and even when circumstances prevent my frequent reading of him, I have ever the same delicious pleasure in thinking that this friendship is a possession that will be lifelong. Nothing will alienate me from him, and no power can take from me the joy there is in his exquisite work and his sweet spirit.

A Book of Hours

This was point one that I wished to show you, how a writer himself may become our personal friend, and the second point that I wish to make is that some character in a book may become our friend.

A young girl that I admire very much is Elizabeth Bennet. Do you know her? She is the heroine of "Pride and Prejudice." Lord Beaconsfield claimed to have read "Pride and Prejudice" seventeen times.

If you don't know Elizabeth I hope you will all make her acquaintance soon. She is one of my most admired friends, bright, vivacious, winsome, and her creator, Jane Austen, has, too, a style. Style is something very hard to define, but is the essential quality which makes one writer's work differ from another, and gives it its distinctive value. Were I talking to you much about literature, I should be continually harping on *style*, because to my mind it makes *the writer*. There is a certain edition of "Pride and Prejudice" in which I have much pleasure. It is illustrated by Mr. Hugh Thomson, and has an introduction by Prof. Saintsbury, which is most sympathetic. He says a world of charming things about Elizabeth Bennet, and in the

The Friendliness of Books

course of his little essay he mentions several other heroines: I wonder if you know them.

He says: "In the novels of the last hundred years there are vast numbers of young ladies with whom it might be a pleasure to fall in love; there are, at least, five with whom, as it seems to me, no man of taste and spirit can help doing so. Their names are, in chronological order, Elizabeth Bennet, Diana Vernon, Beatrix Esmond, Argemone Lavington, Barbara Grant. I should have been most in love with Beatrix and Argemone, for occasional companionship I should have preferred Barbara or Diana, but to live with and marry not one of them is comparable to Elizabeth Bennet."

These heroines are all in my acquaintance, and once I wrote a little story where these heroines came together. It was at the home of Barbara Grant that they met, and Barbara Grant lived in Edinburgh, and were there time I could explain to you fully and satisfactorily, I am sure, why they met there, rather than at Longbourne, the Bennets' home, or Whitford Priors, where the Lavingtons lived, or at Kensington, where Rachel Esmond lived with her beautiful daughter. Osbaldistone Hall, Diana's

A Book of Hours

nominal home, is too remote. So Edinburgh seemed the most convenient place. Barbara is playing on her harpsichord, and saying over the lines she so saucily sung to David Balfour:

“ I am Miss Grant, sib to the advocate. You, I believe, are——”

“ Diana Vernon,” calls out Diana, and she enters with her riding whip. Of course she rode; no one would expect Diana to come any other way, and very likely she took two or three five-barred gates on the way.

Barbara says: “ Sit ye down and we’ll have ‘ a two-handed crack ’ before anyone else comes in.”

“ Are you expecting anyone else? ”

“ It may be that Beatrix Esmond may look in.”

Now there are very complicated political reasons which can only be understood by those that know Diana and Beatrix, why Diana should frown on the spoiled beauty, but when Beatrix comes in her sedan-chair, Diana is courteous, and even admires the lace stomacher which Beatrix wears, and which she tells us is maline lace her cousin Colonel Esmond brought her from Flanders. Then Argemone comes, very elegant in a britzska, and lastly Elizabeth Ben-

The Friendliness of Books

net, who has walked, and whose eyes are glowing and whose cheeks are brightly red.

It is a very animated conversation that these young ladies had, and, if I were sure that you all knew them as well as do I, I would tell you all they said, but it would be dull listening to the talk of strangers.

Charles Lamb may represent for us the author we know, and Elizabeth Bennet and her friends will give us characters whose acquaintance we made in books; and Charles Lamb suggests the essay to us, and Elizabeth Bennet the novel, and now I'd like to show you how a bit of poetry now and again helps us to enjoy the country ways of old England.

I have great love for rivers in mountain countries, and the River Rothay in Westmoreland has a large piece of my heart. It rises up in Easdale Tarn, foaming and tossing, then becomes quieter. "Sing him thy best, for few or none sing him aright now he is gone."

*The rude old church, with bare, bald tower is
here,*

*Beneath it highborn Rothay flows,
Rothay, remembering well who slumbers here,
And with cool murmur lulling his repose.*

A Book of Hours

*Behind Helm Crag and Silver How the sheen
Of the retreating day is less and less,
Soon will the lordlier summits here unseen
Gather the night about their nakedness.
The half-heard bleat of sheep comes from the
hill,
Faint sounds of childish play are in the air,
The river murmurs past, all else is still,
The very graves seem stiller than they were.*

And this is a touch of evening stillness:

“Star follows star into the eve and the blue
far above us, so blue and so far. And as a spray
of honeysuckle flower brushes across a tired
traveler's face and starts him that he thinks a
ghost went by, so Hoden brushed by Hermod's
side.”

And this scherzo gives a loving humorous
fancy tonight:

*Night is to work in, night is for playtime,
Good Heavens, not daytime.
Oh, to sit on the bough
That zigzags low by the woodland pool,
And loudly laugh at man, the fool,
That vows to the vulgar sun,
But Oh, the sweetness, and Oh, the light,
Of the high fastidious night!
Oh, to awake with the wise old stars,
The cultured, the careful, the Chesterfield stars!*

The Friendliness of Books

It is a beautiful country, but every inch of the way has association. Here a poet has lived, there a poet wrote. And it is only when this poetry is your own that the full joy of the country can be yours.

Sometimes it is said to me by those who know I spend a good deal of time abroad, "You must be fond of traveling." Now, as a matter of fact, I am not fond of mere traveling, but I do love to see a place which is consecrated to me because some poet has dwelt in it or written of it. I would travel far to see that. And what gives me my desire is the same friendly book.

I want to see the things of which Shakespeare and Milton have sung. What shall we read in preparation for England? It may be an unsatisfactory answer, perhaps, but I say *read*, read English literature, the English poets and essayists, and novelists, too. Suppose you hear a lark's song. It is sweet. But if you know what Shakespeare says of it, and Shelley and Meredith, 'twill be infinitely sweeter. And so of every bird that sings, and every flower that grows, the friendly book will give you greater enjoyment of them.

Every part of England has its associations. I

A Book of Hours

stopped short with the lake country. One of the most interesting towns in the world is Oxford; it interests one person for one thing, another for some other reason, but here again to me are all my book associations. Magdalen Bridge brings Shelley to memory, Pembroke College, Samuel Johnson; then among the illustrious names that troop from Oxford's past are Sir Joshua Reynolds, Garrick, Oliver Goldsmith, Edmund Burke, Burne-Jones, William Morris. It is said that to call Oxford's roll is to include the best of England's genius. Everywhere about this beautiful city are there memories of those that have given lovely, lasting things to literature.

But one may read for the mere joy of reading, and something that has always been a delight to me is a purely lyrical poem—one that in itself has the elements of a song. The saying aloud of such poems is to me the enjoyment of possessing an art. It takes the place of what other people have in technic for music or painting or writing.

Let me quote you these songs just for lyrical joy, the first, the song from Yeat's "Land of Heart's Desire,"

The Friendliness of Books

*The wind blows out of the gates of day,
The wind blows over the lonely of heart
And the lonely of heart is withered away,
While the fairies dance in a place apart,
Shaking their milk-white feet in a ring,
Tossing their milk-white arms in the air;
For they hear the wind laugh, and murmur and
sing*

*Of a land where even the old are fair,
And even the wise are merry of tongue;
But I heard a reed of Coolaney say,
"When the wind has laughed and murmured
and sung,
The lonely of heart is withered away!"*

And this from Sidney Lanier's "Song of the
Chattahoochee,"

*Out of the hills of Habersham,
Down the valleys of Hall,
I hurry amain to reach the plain,
Run the rapid and leap the fall,
Split at the rock and together again,
Accept my bed or narrow or wide,
And flee from folly on every side
With a lover's pain to attain the plain
Far from the hills of Habersham,
Far from the valleys of Hall.*

* * *

*But, oh, not the hills of Habersham,
And oh, not the valleys of Hall*

A Book of Hours

*Avail: I am fain for to water the plain.
Downward the voices of Duty call—
Downward, to toil and be mixed with the main,
The dry fields burn, and the mills are to turn,
And a myriad flowers mortally yearn,
And the lordly main from beyond the plain
Call o'er the hills of Habersham
Calls through the valleys of Hall.*

And then this is from "The Symphony" of Sidney Lanier.

*"O trade! O trade! would thou wert dead!
The time needs heart—'tis tired of head:
We're all for love," the violins said.
"Of what avail the rigorous tale
Of bill for coin and box for bale?
Grant thee, O trade! thine uttermost hope;
Level red gold with blue sky slope,
And base it deep as devils grope:
When all's done, what hast thou won
Of the only sweet that's under the sun?
Ay, canst thou buy a single sigh
Of true love's least, least ecstasy?"*

*Life! Life! thou sea fugue,
Writ from east to west,
Love, Love alone can pore
On thy dissolving score
Of harsh half-phrasings,
Blotted ere writ,*

The Friendliness of Books

And doubled erasings

Of chords most fit.

Yea, Love, sole music master blest

May read thy weltering palimpsest.

To follow Time's dying melodies through,

And never to lose the old in the new,

And ever to solve the discords true—

Love alone can do.

And ever Love hears the poor folks crying,

And ever Love hears the women sighing,

And ever sweet Knighthood's death defying,

And ever wise childhood's deep implying,

But never a trader's glozing and lying.

And yet shall Love himself be heard,

Though long deferred, though long deferred:

O'er the modern waste a dove hath whirred;

Music is Love in search of a word."

But notwithstanding the social and intimate friendliness of books, the extension they give to our culture and interest, and the actual possession of a personal art to one who memorizes and quotes from them, all readers will probably agree that the fundamental advantage of a love for books is the comfort of them, their substitution for the things of life which we miss, yet need not miss, having all written down for us in the heart's blood of those who knew.

Sir John Herschel said regarding this point:

A Book of Hours

“Were I to pray for a taste that should stand me in stead under every variety of circumstances, and be a source of happiness and cheerfulness to me during life, and a shield against its ills, however things might go amiss and the world frown upon me, it would be a taste for reading. Give a man this taste and the means of gratifying it, and you can hardly fail of making him a happy man. You place him in contact with the best society in every period of history—with the wisest, the wittiest, the tenderest, the bravest, and the purest characters who have adorned humanity. You make him a denizen of all nations, a contemporary of all ages. The world has been created for him.” And Macaulay says likewise: “I would rather be a poor man in a garret with plenty of books, than a king who did not love reading.”

But to my own particular books which live in the room with me, I am most sensitive to their friendliness, and to that sweet spirit of friendliness which emanates from them I feel most humbly,

. . . *O my master,
Pardon me, if in vain thou art my master,
And I fail to bring before men's eyes
The image of the thing my heart is filled with.*

IN PRAISE OF LONDON:
CHARLES LAMB'S LETTERS AND
ESSAYS

THE phrase, "in praise of London," may be misunderstood, so let me explain at once. I am going to let Charles Lamb praise London, while I praise Charles Lamb. London ne'er had so loving, so loyal a son as was Lamb, and while I shall not limit myself to one element of his "Letters and Essays," I wish to emphasize that London had Lamb's warm love from his earliest days to the last. In the last years of his life he removed to Enfield, but he hoped some time to go to London "to breathe the fresher air of the metropolis." He removed from one house to another in Enfield, and liked the second one better because it was *forty inches* nearer town. How he loved the life of London. "I have shed tears in the motley Strand for fullness of joy in so much living. . . . Is any night walk comparable to a walk from St. Paul's to Charing Cross, for lighting and

A Book of Hours

paving, for crowds going and coming without respite, the rattle of coaches, and the cheerfulness of shops?"

During the years that I have talked on various subjects allied to literature, I have never asked any audience to listen twice to a disquisition on Charles Lamb—for which I owe the audiences an apology, as I ought every season to try to make them better acquainted with his sweet, diffusive life, and with his delightful literary work. Although Lamb is to me "the best beloved of English writers," I have hesitated to accentuate the pleasure I have in his work, lest my hearers grow weary of my note.

I shall not tell you anything new about Lamb, there is nothing new to tell, but lovers of Lamb like to hear the old retold. I have not made any startlingly original criticism—how can I, when for seventy years nearly, ever since Lamb's death in 1834, critical appreciations have been forthcoming?

It was a pleasant surprise to Dr. Holmes to know that his feeling for his great-grandmother was not peculiar to him, but that everyone shared it. I shall like to know that you share my feeling with Lamb's admirers—a sense of

In Praise of London

kinship, fellowship. Margaret Ogilvie was wont to designate people as *blacks* if they failed of her approval. "He is a *black*," she used to say of Stevenson, because he had a larger public than her son. In the same spirit I call Carlyle a black, because he failed to give the kind word to Lamb. He is a signal exception among the men of letters, but he, the great celebrant of heroes, overlooked the heroic in Charles Lamb, and had no better word for him than "that he was a sorry phenomenon with an insuperable proclivity to gin." It is a pleasant unction to my soul to recall Swinburne's remark, that "the 'Essays of Elia' will be found to have kept their perfume, and the 'Letters of Charles Lamb' their sweet savor, when 'Sartor Resartus' lies darkening under the dust that covers its rarely disturbed pages."

I hope you are not going to demand the most temperate expressions from me this hour. I think I may disappoint you if you insist upon that. Mr. Hamilton Mabie says: "There are days for Shakespeare, and days for Sir Thomas Browne, and days for Lamb, although I am often of the opinion that all days are for Lamb." For myself I do not know anyone whose pres-

A Book of Hours

ence is so unobtrusive and acceptable at all times as is Charles Lamb's. And I was long ago of the opinion that all days are for Lamb.

Lamb tells his own story in very frank autobiography. It is a pleasure to put his "Essays and Letters" in an order that tell a story of his life so completely that, to use his own expression, "no additaments are required" to a full reading of it. Not only with the main events, but with the minute details one may become acquainted. His literary tastes are declared with charming candor in "Old and New Schoolmaster," "Detached Thoughts on Books and Reading," "Old China," to name only a trio of essays.

In one of Lamb's letters to Southey he writes: "I am a Christian, Englishman, Londoner, *Templar*. God help me when I come to put off these snug relations and get abroad in the world to come." Lamb's claim to being a *Templar* should be allowed, I think. He was born in the Temple, and had several homes in it, and it is Lamb's *Temple*, primarily, that one haunts in London to-day. And may I say just a word explanatory of this Temple, hallowed to the enthusiast because of the association with Lamb,

In Praise of London

Goldsmith, Johnson, Spencer, Shakespeare, Sheridan. It was originally a lodge of the Knights Templars, which, as you know, was an order, military and religious, founded in the twelfth century to protect the Holy Sepulcher. On the dissolution of the order in 1313, it became crown property, and after some vicissitudes in ownership it passed into possession of the Knights of St. John, who, in 1346, leased it to the students of common law. From that day, more than five and a half centuries ago, until now the group of buildings have been a school of law. There were formerly three divisions of the Temple buildings: inner temple was the name given to those within the precincts of the city, middle temple and outer temple without the city. The buildings of the outer temple are removed. The buildings and courts of the Temple extend from the Strand to the Thames. One enters by passages so narrow that there is danger of overlooking them in a hasty journey along the Strand. But these narrow, dark ways lead to a church, one part of which was completed in 1185, and the other in 1240, decorated with the heraldic emblems of the Templars, and containing monuments of the Tem-

A Book of Hours

plars, and beside the church is a labyrinth of courts, a terrace, and cloisters. I unhesitatingly concur in the judgment that pronounces it "the most elegant spot in the metropolis"—and how came it to be Lamb's birthplace? Why, his father, John Lamb, was servant to Samuel Salt, one of the benchers of the inner temple.

"I was born under the shadow of St. Dunstan's steeple, just where the conflux of the eastern and western inhabitants of this twofold city meet and jostle in friendly opposition at Temple Bar." "I was born and passed the first seven years of my life in the Temple. What a transition for a countryman visiting London for the first time! Classic green recesses!" What a transition for a Londoner, too! So many have never been in the Temple, and several looked upon me as an eccentric for going so often to the classic place. It was through the influence of Samuel Salt that Lamb secured his entrance to Christ Hospital, the school founded by Edward VI, the boy patron of boys, on site of thirteenth century Grey Friars, some of whose walls are still standing. There is a Charles Lamb prize now given every year to the best English essayist among Blue Coat boys, consisting of a

In Praise of London

silver medal on one side of which is a laurel wreath, inwrapped around the hospital's arms, on the other side Lamb's profile. It is worthy of consideration how favorable were these early surroundings for fostering Lamb's inherent taste for the quaintnesses of an earlier age. He was some years at Christ Hospital, passing his days between cloister and cloister—the Knights Templars of the twelfth century to the Grey Friars of the thirteenth. Nobody needs to be told the tributes he has paid to his school—the “magnificent eulogy” he has pronounced in his own name, “Recollections of Christ Hospital”; then, with his delight in mystification, conceive the pleasure he must have had in writing from the other point of view, styling the article “Christ Hospital Five and Thirty Years Ago,” over the signature *Elia*:

“I remember Lamb at school, and can well recollect that he had some peculiar advantages, which I and other of his schoolfellows had not. His friends lived in town, and were near at hand; and he had the privilege of going to see them almost as often as he wished, through some invidious distinction, which was denied to us. He had his tea and hot rolls in a morning,

A Book of Hours

while we were battenning upon our quarter-of-a-penny loaf—our *crug* moistened with attenuated small beer, in wooden piggins, smacking of the pitched leathern jack it was poured from. Our Monday's milk porridge, blue and tasteless, and the pea soup of Saturday, coarse and choking, were enriched for him with a slice of 'extraordinary bread and butter' from the hot loaf of the Temple."

Then he assumes the personality of Coleridge. "I was a poor friendless boy. My parents, and those who should care for me, were far away. Those few acquaintances of theirs which they could reckon upon as being kind to me in the great city, after a little forced notice which they had the grace to take of me on my first arrival in town, soon grew tired of my holiday visits. They seemed to them to recur too often, though I thought them few enough; and one after another they failed me, and I felt myself alone among six hundred playmates." This paragraph has such a hold on my imagination, and pictures so touchingly the lonely little Christ Hospital boy, that one evening last summer, when a little fellow wearing the garb of the hospital was a guest at the table where I ate,

In Praise of London

I was quite concerned lest he should feel some lack of cordiality in his welcome and entertainment.

After going on for some paragraphs in the character of Coleridge, Lamb takes on his own identity, and makes his famous apostrophe to Coleridge: "Come back into memory like as thou wert in the dayspring of thy fancies—with hope like a fiery column before thee, the dark pillar not yet turned, Samuel Taylor Coleridge, logician, metaphysician, bard. How have I seen the casual passer through the cloisters stand still, entranced with admiration (while he weighed the disproportion between the speech and the garb of the young *Mirandula*), to hear thee unfold, in thy deep and sweet intonations, the mysteries of *Jamblichus*, or *Plotinus* (for even in those years thou waxedest not pale at such philosophic draughts), or reciting *Homer* in his Greek or *Pindar*—while the walls of the old Grey Friars reëchoed to the accents of the *inspired charity boy!*"

Lamb was happy at school; favorite with fellow-pupils and instructors, one hears nothing of the tyranny of Boyer, the head master, exercised over Lamb—"protected by some attraction of

A Book of Hours

temper in the quaint child." Lamb's rank at school would have entitled him to a university education at Cambridge or Oxford, the bounty bestowed on the best scholars by the hospital, but acceptance implied the taking of orders, and the impediment in Lamb's speech prevented his looking to the Church, and, furthermore, his assistance was needed at home in the support of the family. Doubtless when he left, aged nearly fifteen, he had some acquaintance with his lifelong "midnight darlings," above all, he had nurtured himself upon the plays of Shakespeare, which were the "strongest and sweetest food of his mind from infancy."

"Melancholy was the transition at fourteen from the abounding playtime." Now for thirty-five years Lamb was to know the "dull drudgery of the desk's dead wood." Samuel Salt had died, the Lambs had removed to poor quarters in Little Queen Street, and here it was that Mary, the sister, in a fit of temporary madness, killed her mother. Always when I have spoken of this event, I have let the barest mention suffice, lest I should harrow the feelings of my auditors, but I am going to read to you a little concerning it, and my defense is this: after

In Praise of London

reading Dr. Brown's story, "Rab and His Friends," many said: "Why did you make me suffer so?" When that was told the father of Dr. Brown, he said: "And why shouldn't they suffer? It will do them good, for pity—genuine pity—as old Aristotle says, is 'of power to purge the mind.'"

"During those lamentable days Lamb saw his sister but seldom. 'Alas! I too often hear her! Her rambling chat is better to me than the sense and sanity of this world.' That is to me the most tender and touching utterance in all the letters since letters were invented."

The newspaper report of this affair is gratifying because of its decent reticence. No names are given. Benjamin Ellis Martin says: "One error the reporter did make. It was not the landlord, but Charles, who came at the child's cries, luckily at hand just in time to disarm his sister, and thus prevent another harm. So he was at hand from that day on, all through his life, holding her and helping her in the frequent successive returns of her wretched malady. His gentle, loving, resolute soul proved its fine and firm fiber under the strain of more than forty years of undeviating devotion to which I know

A Book of Hours

no parallel. He quietly gave up all other ties and cares for this supreme duty; he never repined, nor posed; he never even said to himself that he was doing a fine thing." He took his duty to be "wedded to the fortunes of my sister and my poor old father." The father would complain: "If you won't play with me, you might as well not come home at all." The justice of this Lamb recognized, and gave the evenings to his father. In "Benchers of the Inner Temple" he has given a picture of his father in his prime, of his honesty, his cleverness—then "I saw him in the last stage of human weakness, 'a remnant' most forlorn of what he was. He would weep till I have wished that sad second childhood might have a mother still to lay its head upon her lap. But the common mother of us all received him gently into hers."

Of life with his sister Mary, he writes: "We house together, old bachelor and maid, with occasional bickerings, as it should be among near relations." In his life there was from now on "mingling of the grave, even terrible, with the gay, and 'twas reflected in his work." There were periods when Mary and he lived quietly together, working, caring one for the other, and

In Praise of London

then there came weeks or months when they were separated and Lamb was left alone. But friends grew in numbers, and the hospitality of the Lambs was famous. The Lambs went back to live in the Temple, and for fifteen or sixteen years the loved locality was their home. Have you ever walked down dingy Inner Temple Lane, or along King's Bench Walk, and pictured to yourself the goodly company that came to those humble rooms? There was a repast set out, and everyone helped himself to the cold *roast* or *boiled*, the smoking roasted potatoes, and foaming porter from a Fleet Street tap! It hasn't a delicate savor—but decline the material viands if you will, you can't pretend to find better company elsewhere. Coleridge, Wordsworth, Hazlitt, Godwin, Captain Burney, his son Martin, Leigh Hunt, Tom Hood, De Quincey, Sergeant Talfoned, Crabb Robinson—these were a few of the stars, and the brightest that graced the rooms. Crabb Robinson says: "In that humble apartment I spent many happy hours, and saw a greater number of excellent persons than I had ever seen collected together in one room." There was whist, and probably the *rigor* of the game was maintained usually, even

A Book of Hours

to the standard of Sarah Battle; but the rigor must have been relaxed somewhat on the occasion when Lamb made the famous remark to Martin Burney: "Martin, if dirt were trumps, what a hand you would hold!" But it is of this same Martin that Lamb says: "Free from self-seeking, any low design, I have not known a whiter soul than thine."

'Twas here in the Temple that Charles and Mary, the bachelor and spinster, did Shakespeare into fine form for the children whom they loved. Mary says: "You would like to see us, as we often sit writing on one table (but not on one cushion sitting), like Hermia and Helena in 'A Midsummer Night's Dream,' or, rather, like an old literary Darby and Joan, I taking snuff, and he groaning all the while, and saying he can make nothing of it, which he always says till he has finished, and then he finds he has made something of it."

Have you ever been to Covent Garden some morning to see the fruit and flowers? Did you go down Russell Street from Drury Lane, pass the theater on your left, and 20 Russell Street on your right—did you stop to look a minute at 20 Russell Street, and ponder, "Here were writ-

In Praise of London

ten the essays that have charmed readers for three generations and will go on charming them for many more." Daily, Charles Lamb, a clerk in the East India House, wended his way from Russell Street to Leadenhall Street, performed his clerkly duties from ten to four; here were begun in 1820 the "Essays of Elia." Lamb writes to Dorothy Wordsworth when they take up their home in Russell Street: "We are in the individual spot that I like best in all this great city." In Lamb's parlor, in Russell Square, Coleridge used to repeat his own *Kubla Khan* so entrancingly that "it irradiates and brings heaven and elysian bowers into my parlor while he sings or says it." And from here stood the permanent invitation, "Cards and cold mutton in Russell Street on Friday at eight to nine. Gin and jokes from one half past that time to twelve."

It was in the last years of his dwelling in the Temple and the six in Russell Street that he did most of his writing. From Russell Street, after six years, they removed to Islington, 19 Colebrook Row.

Although it is not my purpose here to speak with any detail of Lamb's friends, I must, in con-

A Book of Hours

nection with Colebrook Row, mention George Dyer. He appears repeatedly in Lamb's letters, and on several occasions in his essays. Scholarly, absent, and eccentric naturally, there is no doubt he was, but Lamb has gently, playfully elaborated upon those qualities, and the George Dyer that one meets in Lamb's works is a delightful creation. Augustine Birrell has suggested that one with time at his command should hunt George Dyer through Lamb's letters, and find it excellent game.

When I was looking in Cambridge for some books relating to its history, a bookseller put in my hand the "History of Cambridge," by George Dyer, and there flashed before me a vision of Lamb's dear absent-minded friend, George Dyer.

Lamb says: "D. has been engaged, he tells me, through a long course of laborious years in an investigation into all curious matter connected with the two universities. The ardor with which he engages in these liberal pursuits, I am afraid, has not met with all the encouragement it deserves, either here or at Cambridge."

"When you come Londonward, you will no longer find us in Covent Garden, but in Cole-

In Praise of London

brook Row." It was to this house in Colebrook Row that Lamb came home forever when his employers gave the very kind recognition of his long service by retiring him upon a handsome pension. "'Twas with some pain we were evulsed from Colebrooke; you may find some of our flesh sticking to the doorposts. To change habitations is to die to them; and in my time I have died seven deaths. But I do not know whether every such change does not bring with it a rejuvenescence. 'Tis an enterprise, and shoves back the sense of death's approximating. My house deaths have generally been periodical, recurring after seven years, but this last is premature by half that time. Cut off in the flower of Colebrooke! The Middletonian stream and all its echoes mourn. Even the minnows dwindle."

Then when he moved again he writes:

"We have finally torn ourselves outright away from Colebrooke, where I had no health, and are about to domiciliate for good at Enfield, where I have experienced *good*." Then the Lambs went still farther into the country to Enfield. At first they kept house, but the care was too great for Mary, and they went to board in

A Book of Hours

the next house. "We have taken a farewell of the pompous troublesome trifle called housekeeping, and are settled down into poor boarders and lodgers, at next door, with an old couple, the Baucis and Baucida of Enfield."

In "Best Letters" he writes: "I have passed all my days in London, until I have formed as many and intense local attachments as any of you mountaineers can have done with dead nature." "A garden was the primitive prison until man with Promethean felicity and boldness luckily sinned himself out of it." But Lamb's essays reveal another phase of his love for London—a love for humanity, all humanity, but particularly for those that are, because of accident, apart from their fellows. He has written essays of exquisite finish, of the tenderest humor. Their literary quality cannot be denied—it is the finest; but diffused throughout them is the element which makes us love the man Lamb apart from the artist—it is the quality of *humanity*, the love of his kind, which pervades his work. Next to the pleasure of reading Lamb himself is the satisfaction one gets in a thoroughly good appreciation of him, and Walter Pater's subtle analysis of Lamb's work cannot fail to please one. Pater

In Praise of London

says: "His simple mother pity for those who suffer by accident, or unkindness of nature, blindness or fateful disease of mind like his sister's, has something primitive in its largeness." I shall like to instance two or three of Lamb's essays in which this kindly spirit animates the whole. Do you know the essay "In Praise of Chimney Sweepers"? Poetical it is. Professor Gates says that "the chimney sweeper comes out all cobwebbed with a gossamer beauty—a sort of prince from the Land of Dreaming, a sublimated little symbol of thoughts and feelings that in actual life are leagues out of his ken." That is true; but underneath that airy, fantastic little figure he evolves is the genuine, grimy little sweep whom Lamb loves and pities for his hard, unchildlike lot. From "On the Decay of Beggars," no one will for a moment fancy that Lamb is seriously an advocate of mendicity, but he is pleading for charity of heart as well as pocket, for the unfortunate, maimed, and blind whose untoward fortune has given them to bear wallet and clap dish. His essay "Poor Relations" begins with raillery, but ends with a dignified portrait of the self-respecting poor relation.

A Book of Hours

But do not for a moment think that, considered as literature, I would have you put the autobiographic quality of the essays above the literary value. I have been emphasizing the personal element, the love we give to the man, irrespective of the artist, but it is quite time that we consider the rare quality of the artistic output, irrespective of the man. Lamb might have been all that he was—a loving brother, a devoted son, a constant friend; underneath the blithe surface there might have been the same tragic undercurrent, and had his work been without intrinsic value he would never have come into our ken—for our love and admiration. There is a danger that the personal may be made to dominate, that the *anecdotal* will entirely satisfy, and Lamb's work remain unread; but let it not be so with you. For himself, and from his own point of view, the exercise of his gift, of his literary art, came to gild or sweeten a life of monotonous labor, and seemed, as far as regarded others, no very important thing, availing to give them a little pleasure and inform them a little, chiefly in a retrospective manner, but in no way concerned with the turning of the tides of the great world. And yet this very modesty, this unambi-

In Praise of London

tious way of conceiving his work, has impressed upon it a certain exceptional enduringness. Of the remarkable English writers contemporary with Lamb, many were occupied with religious, moral, political ideas, which have since, in some sense or other, entered permanently into the general consciousness, and these having no longer any stimulus for a generation provided with a different stock of ideas; the writings of those who spent so much of themselves in their propagation have lost with posterity something of what they gained by them in immediate influence.

There is a point in Lamb where autobiography and literary imagination meet in such charming wholeness that, although the subject is so delicate and personal, sad and fruitless, we may benefit by the evanescence of its truthfulness, to enjoy and speak of it as, perhaps, spiritual biography. I refer to his two loves—for Alice we have that New Year's letter.

"I would scarce now have any of those untoward accidents and events of my life reversed. I would no more alter them than the incidents of some well-contrived novel. Methinks it is better that I should have pined away seven of

A Book of Hours

my goldenest years, when I was thrall to the fair hair and fairer eyes of Alice W—— than that so passionate a love adventure should be lost." And here is the exquisite reverie of the "Dream Children"; "'We are not of Alice nor of thee, nor are we children at all. The children of Alice call Bertram father. We are nothing, less than nothing and dreams. We are only what might have been, and must wait upon the tedious shores of Lethe millions of ages before we have existence and a name'—and immediately awaking I found myself quietly seated in my bachelor armchair with the faithful Bridget unchanged by my side."

And of Hester, the lovely Quakeress, to whom he never spoke, and whom he adored silently and from afar, only knowing that she was named Hester, he leaves:

*When maidens such as Hester die,
Their place we may not well supply,
Though ye among a thousand try,
With vain endeavor.*

*A month or more hath she been dead,
Yet cannot I by force be led
To think upon the wormy bed
And her together.*

In Praise of London

*My sprightly neighbor gone before,
To that unknown and silent shore,
Shall we not meet as heretofore
Some summer morning,*

*When from thy cheerful eyes a ray
Hath struck a bliss upon the day,
A bliss that would not go away,
A sweet forewarning?*

Three important elements of Lamb's work are his style, humor, and critical faculty.

His criticisms on art, drama, and literature are keen, sincere, sane. No art critic has done better by Hogarth. Actors, both men and women, that were Lamb's contemporaries are kept in memory now because of his delicate, discriminating criticism.

Ainger, in speaking of Lamb's defense of Congreve and Wycherly, says: "It must be admitted that Lamb does not convince us of the sincerity of his reasoning, and probably he did not convince himself. He loved paradox, and, moreover, he loved to find some soul of goodness in things evil." As Hartley Coleridge adds, "it was always his way to take hold of things by the better handle."

Of his humor, unexpectedness is its character-

A Book of Hours

istic. John Sterling, it is said, used to chuckle again and again over the sudden way in which he turned up Adam. Just as unexpected in his talk, too, are the slight digressions which make immense wit. Would you not have liked to be his companion one day in the stage coach—"we traveled," he says, "with one of those troublesome fellow-passengers that is called a well-informed man." They had discussed all subjects, and Lamb was thinking of getting outside to escape the annoyance, when the man put the unlucky question: "What sort of a crop of turnips would we have this year?" Lamb replied with the greatest gravity that he believed it depended on the boiled legs of mutton. That clinched the conversation. He replied to the bishop who inquired how he had learned to smoke such furious pipes: "Sir, I have toiled for it as some men toil for virtue." Brander Matthews in an essay whose title I have forgotten, in a book that shares the essay's fate, has stated a list of claims that Americans have in Lamb, and this quality of unexpectedness in his humor constitutes one of the claims.

One of his friends said of his faulty speech: "That stammer was worth an annuity to him as

In Praise of London

an ally for his wit. Firing under cover of that advantage, he did double execution; for in the first place, the distressing sympathy of the hearers with his distress of utterance won for him invariably the silence of deep attention; and then while he had us all hoaxed into this attitude of mute suspense by an appearance of distress that he perhaps did not feel, down came a plunging shot into the very thick of us, with ten times the effect it would else have had."

But before I leave the subject of Lamb's humor, let me once again refer to Walter Pater's appreciation of Lamb. He says, in estimating the humor of Elia, "we must no more forget the strong undercurrent of this great misfortune and pity than we could forget it in his actual story." I have in other connections quoted to you Pater's statement of humor, "it proceeds from the amalgam of pity and mirth," but here it belongs. It is from his appreciation of Lamb that he gives the definition.

There is no doubt that the quaint, somewhat archaic style that Lamb gives us in his essays is partly his native style of expression, his distinctive mode of clothing his thought; neither is there any doubt that his inherent tendency was fos-

A Book of Hours

tered by constant association with Browne, Marvel, Massinger, and other beloved worthies of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. It is the happiest vehicle for his thought, and to fail to appreciate how perfectly his thought and expression blend is to lose the essential pleasure from Lamb's style.

Elia has been accused of affectation of style. Better that a writer should be natural in a self-pleasing quaintness than to affect a naturalness that should be strange to him. "I delight in Lamb," I had said to some one. "Why, I should not fancy you'd care for him. Do you like his 'Chapter on Ears?'—'Twin appendages, hanging ornament, and, architecturally speaking, handsome volutes to the human capital.' Do you like that sort of thing?" Think of anyone's losing the light touch of playfulness and taking that essay with solid seriousness.

Those that must have the abstract will not find satisfaction in Lamb. He is ever "close to the concrete, to the details great or small of actual things, no part blurred to his view by abstract theories." In his delightful essay, one of his most delightful essays, "Imperfect Sympathies," one may find explanation why his

In Praise of London

essays will not gratify all—"Never judging systemwise of things, but fastening on particulars."

"They will cost you in cash, these two volumes (his letters), full as they are from title-page to colophon, with the sweetness and nobility, the mirth and the melancholy of their author's life, touched as every page of them is with traces of a hard fate bravely borne, seven shillings sixpence. It is the cab fare to and from a couple of dull dinners."

Who, I wonder, ever managed to squeeze into a correspondence of forty years truer humor, madder nonsense, sounder sense, or more tender sympathy! They do not prate about first principles, but they contain many things conducive to a good life here below. The earlier letters strike the more solemn notes. As a young man, Lamb was deeply religious, and for a time the appalling tragedy of his life, the death of his mother by his sister's hand, deepened this feeling. His letters to Coleridge in September and October, 1776, might very well appear in the early chapters of a saint's life. They exhibit the rare union of a colossal strength, entire truthfulness (no single emotion being ever exaggerated), with the

A Book of Hours

tenderest and most refined feelings. How people, reading these letters, can ever have the impudence to introduce into the tones of their voices, when they are referring to Lamb, the faintest suspicion of condescension, as if they were speaking of one weaker than themselves, must always remain an unsolved problem of human conceit. His notes are all high. He is sublime, heartrending, excruciatingly funny, outrageously ridiculous, sometimes possibly an inch or two overdrawn. He carries the charm of incongruity and total unexpectedness to the highest.

Lamb said of his own reading: "My reading has been lamentably desultory and unmethodical, odd, out-of-the-way old plays and treatises," then he playfully exaggerates his own ignorance. "Mary must have a story, well, ill, or indifferently told; while I am hanging for the thousandth time over Burton or his strange contemporaries she is abstracted in some modern tale or adventure, whereof our common reading table is daily fed with assiduously fresh supplies. . . . I can read anything that is a book. I have no repugnances. Shaftesbury is not too genteel for me, nor Jonathan Wild too low. There are

In Praise of London

things in that shape which I cannot allow for such: Court Calendars, Directories, Pocket-books, Draught Boards, bound and lettered at the back, Scientific Treatises, Almanacs, Statutes—the works of Hume, Gibbon, Robertson, Beattie, works of Flavius Josephus, that learned Jew, and Paley's 'Moral Philosophy.' With these exceptions, I can read almost anything. I thank my stars for a taste so catholic, so unexcluding."

Now I am going to quote from some great lovers of Lamb testimonies of his beautiful spirit. For, after passing through his literary genius, we all, great lovers and obscure, come back with our most voluble if not final word and affection for the dearness of the man.

Edward Fitzgerald quotes Thackeray thus: " ' Saint Charles ! ' said Thackeray to me thirty years ago, putting one of Charles Lamb's letters to his forehead," one that Charles wrote to Bernard Barton. Lionel Johnson has caught the phrase up into a poem :

*Saint Charles! for Thackeray called thee so:
Saint, at whose name our fond hearts glow:
See now, this age of tedious woe,
That snaps and snarls!*

A Book of Hours

*Thine was a life of tragic shade,
A life of care and sorrow made:
But naught could make thine heart afraid,
Gentle Saint Charles!*

*Encumbered dearly with old books,
Thou, by the pleasant chimney nooks
Didst laugh, with merry-meaning looks,
Thy griefs away;
We, bred on modern magazines,
Point out how much our sadness means
Day by dull day.*

*Lover of London! whilst thy feet
Haunted each old familiar street,
Thy brave heart found life's turmoil sweet,
Despite life's pain.
We fume and fret and, when we can,
Cry up some new and noisy plan,
Big with the Rights and Wrongs of Man;
And where's the gain?*

*Gentle Saint Charles! I turn to thee,
Tender and true: thou teachest me
To take with joy what joys there be,
And bear the rest.
Walking thy London day by day,
The thought of thee makes bright my way,
And in thy faith I fain would stay
Doing my best.*

In Praise of London

Coleridge responded to Lamb's desire for consolation, "I look upon you as a man called by sorrow and anguish, and a strange desolation of hopes, into quietness, and a soul set apart and made peculiar to God."

*Oh, he was good, if ever good man was.
The love of friends without a single foe.*

Archbishop Leighton, standing beside Lamb's grave, said: "This sweet, diffusive, bountiful soul, desiring only to do good."

And so Lamb always had his own in life and memory, his friends were always just such ones as he required and deserved, his environment suited his taste and development, but there remains but one false note in all his monuments—he is not buried in his beloved London. And William Watson writes the lament of it, "At Lamb's Grave in Edmonton."

*Not here, O teeming city, was it meet
Thy lover, thy most faithful should repose,
But where the multitudinous lifetide flows,
Whose ocean murmur was to him more sweet
Than melody of birds at morn, or bleat
Of flocks in springtime; there should earth en-
close*

A Book of Hours

*His earth, amid thy thronging joys and woes,
There 'neath the music of thy million feet.*

*In love of thee this lover had no peer,
Thine eastern or thine western fane had made
Fit habitation for his noble shade.
Mother of mighties, nurse of none more dear.
Not here in rustic exile, O not here
Thine Elia like an alien should be laid.*

*EDWARD FITZGERALD AND
HIS FRIENDS IN EAST
ANGLIA*

THE Edward Fitzgerald to whom we are to give the hour is not the hero of picturesque anecdote. The teller of his days must be content to relate how he read his beloved books by his fireside, looked for the daffodils to take the winds of March with beauty, and the yearly return of the birds, sailed his boat in home seas, and, as he sailed, read and translated the ancient classics, consorted with fisher folk, and found in their simple life more in harmony with his taste than in the deadly complex strife waged in other spheres. He was a writer, but "he shunned notoriety as sedulously as most people seek it."

His latest biographer, Mr. Arthur Christopher Benson, after saying that Fitzgerald's life is singularly void of incident, sums it up tersely and truly: "It is the history of a few great friendships, much quiet benevolence, ten-

A Book of Hours

der loyalty, wistful enjoyment. The tangible results are a single small volume of poetry, of imperishable quality, some accomplished translations of no great literary importance, a little piece of delicate prose writing, and many beautiful letters. But over the whole is the indefinable charm of temperament and personality."

And that explains succinctly why I talk of Edward Fitzgerald, why he is our friend, as are other men greater in the world of letters—there is over what he has done *the indefinable charm of temperament and personality* that binds us to him as to a dear friend, in a less degree than we are bound to Lamb, or Goldsmith, or Thackeray, but the quality is akin. Fitzgerald is our personal friend, and because he is, you listen indulgently to my retelling what you know of him.

This scholarly recluse was modest almost beyond imagining in his estimation of himself, affectionate, ever most ready to serve his friends, but rarely seeking them out, and protesting against their taking any trouble to find him, as he had so little to offer; a man whose benefactions were boundless, but most unostentatiously bestowed.

Our best acquaintance with him comes not

Edward Fitzgerald and His Friends

through any biography, but through the "friendly human letters," as Carlyle calls them. Carlyle, in gratefully acknowledging one of Fitzgerald's letters, says: "One gets so many *inhuman* letters, ovine, bovine, porcine; I wish you would write a little oftener; when the beneficent Daimon suggests, fail not to lend an ear to him."

Edward Fitzgerald was born in East Anglia, near Woodbridge, in Suffolk, in an old Jacobean manor house, in 1809. His father was John Purcell, who had married his cousin Miss Fitzgerald, and upon her father's death, whose heiress she was, Mr. Purcell assumed her name and coat of arms. The family owned several English estates, but when Edward was a child they lived for many years in France. In Paris, they lived in a house once occupied by Robespierre. Among their friends in Paris were the Kembles, and in E. F.'s letters to Mrs. Fanny Kemble in later life, and in her reminiscences, we get glimpses of these early days. In her "Old Woman's Gossip" Mrs. Kemble says: "The mother was a remarkable woman, eccentric, of great beauty, and strength of character. Mrs. Fitzgerald is among the most vivid memories of my girlish days. Her husband was a most amiable and ge-

A Book of Hours

nial Irish gentleman." After describing her personal appearance, Mrs. Kemble says: "I also remember as a feature of sundry dinners at their house, the first gold dessert service and table ornaments that I ever saw, the magnificence of which made a great impression upon me."

Edward writes of his mother to Mrs. Kemble: "My mother was a remarkable woman, as you said in a former letter: and as I constantly believe in outward Beauty as an Index of a Beautiful Soul within, I used sometimes to wonder what Feature in her fine Face betrayed what was not so good in her Character. I think as usual the Lips: there was a twist of Mischief in them now and then like that in the Tail of a Cat!—otherwise so smooth and amiable!"

One of Fitzgerald's peculiarities in writing was his fondness for capitals. *Capitals for nouns!* And I can see now how that statement of his looked, besprinkled with large letters.

Edward was sent to a school at Bury St. Edmunds, Edward VI's school, and several of his schoolfellows were lifelong friends—James Spedding, the Baconian; J. M. Kemble, the brother of Fanny Kemble, and a famous Anglo-Saxon scholar; and William Bodham Donne, the

Edward Fitzgerald and His Friends

historical writer. The school had a great reputation, and the Master, Dr. Malkin, gave special attention to the writing of English.

Bury St. Edmunds is an interesting corner of East Anglia, and always held the affection of Fitzgerald. He visited it the day before he died, in June, 1883. It was one of the most famous of English shrines. In the year 867 the pagan Danes martyred the Christian king, Edmund, the last Saxon king of East Anglia. In 903 his remains were translated to Bury St. Edmunds, and the shrine became one of the most famous in England, antedating Becket's shrine by three centuries.

One of the famous abbots—the most famous—was Abbot Sampson. To me, the figure of Abbot Sampson, who presided over the monastery from 1183 to 1202, is intensely interesting. He it is who is the hero of Carlyle's enthusiastic comment in "Past and Present." He is far and away the most picturesque figure connected with Bury St. Edmunds, and if one will but read Carlyle's setting forth of the story, old Bury St. Edmunds will have tenfold the interest it can have without his dramatic painting of the doings of Abbot Sampson and his compeers. As I

A Book of Hours

walked about the ruins of Bury St. Edmunds with the loquacious gardener, he explained many points in a way distinctly his own. I was looking at some slabs that were unearthed not such a very long time ago, and the gardener explained: "During some recent *eskervations* those *pantiles* were uncovered, and one of them is probably that of Abbot Sampson." I am sure the good man could not understand the fervor of my tone, as I exclaimed: "Oh, I hope it is the tomb of the abbot!" nor the eagerness with which I scanned the *eskervated pantiles*.

But if Abbot Sampson is to me the most interesting figure, the most interesting event is one that occurred a few years after the death of the abbot. Everyone knows of the tyranny of John Lackland, King of England, of his abuse of power, and how his barons wearied of his bad government, his nonfulfillment of promises, his exactions, demanded and obtained the *Magna Charta*; but perhaps you have forgotten that it was here at Bury St. Edmunds, in the beautiful old abbey, during the saint's festival, in the year 1214, that the doughty barons made their vows to demand their rights. To me, the ruins of the high altar, before which the barons solemnly

Edward Fitzgerald and His Friends

swore that unless the king granted them the charter they would unite against him, arm their retainers, and fight until they gained their end, is one of the most sacred places I have ever seen.

This seems a long digression from Fitzgerald, perhaps, but it is an intentional one, as I wish you to know that these East Anglia places which have some slight interest from Edward Fitzgerald's brief tarrying may have great interest apart from him, too. And Bury St. Edmunds is the next place chosen for a historic pageant, succeeding Warwick in 1906, and Sherburne in 1905, transcending either in historic episodes, to my mind. Of course King Edward's school will figure in the pageant, and if any of you happily see it, remember that "dear old Fitz" was for many years a King Edward's schoolboy, that some of the most valued friendships of his life began here, and he used to say the finest declamation he ever listened to was Kemble's recitation of Hotspur's speech, "My liege, I did deny no prisoners," on a prize day at Bury.

From Bury St. Edmunds Fitzgerald matriculated at Trinity College, Cambridge; he lodged at No. 19 King's Parade, looking out on the screen of King's College. The master of Trin-

A Book of Hours

ity at this time was Christopher Wordsworth, brother of the poet, a man who is described of "majestic appearance and donnish manners." Fitzgerald and his irreverent friends named him "the Meeserable Sinner," from his affected manner of responding in the college chapel. The same irreverent undergraduates called William Wordsworth the "Meeserable Poet," although Fitzgerald had previously styled him "Daddy" Wordsworth.

At Cambridge Fitzgerald did no grinding, he made friends and enjoyed them, and it is a most distinguished list: Thompson, the famous master of Trinity (to become); Spedding and Kemble from the old school; William Makepeace Thackeray; Monckton Milnes, afterward Lord Houghton; and the three Tennysons, who were his contemporaries, but he came to know them better after college days. He was most regardless of his appearance. His clothes were always in a sad state of dilapidation, and once, when his stately mother came in her coach and four to call on him, and sent her manservant to look him up, Fitzgerald could not see his lady mother, as his only pair of boots was at the cobler's.

Edward Fitzgerald and His Friends

Thackeray and Fitzgerald were warm friends, and there is a charming account of their meeting in Paris, but let Thackeray tell it, as he does in one of his delightful "Roundabout Papers": "I remember I had but 12s. left after a certain little Paris excursion (about which my benighted parents never knew anything) at Dover. I remember ordering for dinner a whiting, a beefsteak, and a glass of negus, and the bill was: dinner 7s., glass of negus 2s., waiter 6d., and only half a crown left, as I was a sinner, for the guard and coachman on the way to London! And I *was* a sinner. I had gone without leave. What a long, dreary, guilty journey it was from Paris to Calais, I remember! This was the Easter vacation of 1830. I always think of it when I am crossing to Calais. Guilt, sir, guilt, remains stamped on the memory, and I feel easier in my mind that it is liberated of the old peccadillo. I met my old college tutor only yesterday. He had the very next room to mine. After he had gone into his apartment, having shaken me quite kindly by the hand, I felt inclined to knock at his door and say: 'Doctor Bentley, I beg your pardon, but do you remember when I was going down at the Easter vacation in 1830 you

A Book of Hours

asked me where I was going to spend my vacation, and I said with my friend Slingsby, in Huntingtongshire? Well, sir, I grieve to have to confess that I told you a fib. I had got twenty pounds, and was going for a lark to Paris, where my friend Edward was staying.' There it is out." And are we not all glad of this boyish escapade of Thackeray's and his Paris meeting with Fitzgerald, since we have the confession in the delightful paper?

Because Fitzgerald's "Euphranor" is scened at Cambridge I will speak of it here, although it was not written until 1851. It is a dialogue on chivalry, and, as Fitzgerald says, "disfigured by some confounded smart writing," although in another place he says it is a pretty piece of chiseled cherry stone. But when you are at Cambridge, counting up its worthies, I shall be glad if you will number among them "dear old Fitz," and when you sit in some lovely nook along the banks there will be no harm if you take a peep at "Euphranor," and read the concluding passage which Tennyson pronounced one of the finest bits of prose in our literature:

"We walked along the fields by the Church, crossed the Ferry, and mingled with the crowd

Edward Fitzgerald and His Friends

upon the opposite shore; Townsmen and Gownsmen, with the tassel'd Fellowcommoner sprinkled here and there—Reading men and Sporting men—Fellows and even Masters of Colleges, not indifferent to the prowess of their respective crews—all these conversing on all sorts of topics, from the slang in Bell's 'Life' to the last new German Revelation, and moving in ever-changing groups down the shore of the river, at whose farther bend was a little knot of Ladies gathered upon a green knoll, faced and illuminated by the beams of the setting sun. Beyond which point was at length heard some indistinct shouting, which gradually increased until 'They are off—they are coming!' suspended other conversation among ourselves, and suddenly the head of the first boat turn'd the corner; and then another close upon it; and then a third; the crews pulling with all their might compacted into perfect rhythm; and the crowd on shore turning round to follow along with them, waving hats and caps, and cheering, 'Bravo, St. John!' 'Go it, Trinity!'—the high crest and blowing forelock of Phidippus's mare, and he himself, shouting encouragement to his crew, conspicuous over all—until, the boats reaching

A Book of Hours

us, we also were caught up in the returning tide of spectators, and hurried back toward the goal; where we were just in time to see the Ensign of Trinity lowered from its pride of place and the Eagle of St. John's soaring there instead. Then waiting a little while to hear how the winner had won, and the loser lost, and watching Phidippus engaged in eager conversation with his defeated brethren, I took Euphranor and Lexilogus under either arm, and walk'd home with them across the meadow leading to the town, whither the dusky groups of Gownsmen with all their confused voices seem'd, as it were, evaporating in the twilight, while a Nightingale began to be heard among the flowering Chestnuts of Jesus."

Fitzgerald, soon after leaving college, in January, 1830, makes this forecast of his future life. He is writing to his beloved friend Allen: "Tell Thackeray that he is never to invite me to his house, as I intend never to go; not that I would not go there rather than any place, but I cannot stand seeing new faces in the polite circles. You must know I am going to become a great bear: and I have got all sorts of Utopian ideas into my head about society; these may all

Edward Fitzgerald and His Friends

be very absurd, but I try the experiment on myself, so I can do no great harm."

Among the estates that the Fitzgeralds owned there was one which included the battle-field of Naseby, and the year after the promulgation of the social principles I have quoted in the letter, he wrote at Naseby what is, to me, by far his most interesting piece of verse, "The Meadows in Spring." It was published anonymously in Howe's "Table Book," and was by many attributed to Lamb, and Lamb admired it, and owned that he would gladly have been its author. Fitzgerald was but twenty-two when this appeared, Lamb was just at his fifty-fifth birthday, and the spirit of tender retrospect which makes the poem the exquisite thing it is seems more natural for Lamb's maturity than for the youthful Fitzgerald:

*'Tis a dull sight
To see the year dying
When winter winds
Set the yellow wood sighing,
Sighing, oh! sighing.*

And the pleasant comment that Fitzgerald makes: "If my verses be not good, they are good-humored, and that is something." A poem

A Book of Hours

like "The Meadows in Spring" helps to win our love for the man, but so does a letter like this:

"London, November 27, 1832.

"My dear Allen: The first thing I do in answering your letter is to tell you that I am angry at your saying that your conscience pricks you for not having written to me before. I am of that superior race of men that are quite content to hear themselves talk, and read their own writing. But, in seriousness, I have such love of you, and of myself, that once every week, at least, I feel spurred on by a sort of gathering up of feelings to vent myself in a letter upon you: but if once I hear you say that it makes your conscience thus uneasy till you answer, I shall give it up. Upon my word, I tell you that I do not in the least require it. You who do not love writing cannot think that anyone else does: but I assure you that I have a very young-lady-like partiality to writing to those that I love."

His letters show his reading, as he frequently gave criticisms on what he read, and when he found odd, out-of-the-way beauty in prose or poetry, he was often at the pains of copying it that his correspondents might share his delight. He delighted much in Shakespeare's sonnets, and says in one of his early letters: "Shake-

Edward Fitzgerald and His Friends

spere's sonnets seem stuck all about my heart, like the ballads that used to be on the walls of London."

Perhaps one does not associate Fitzgerald with the lake country, but a casual visit that he and Tennyson paid to that region has been interestingly chronicled by Fitzgerald and Hallam Tennyson. In Hallam's "Life of Lord Tennyson" he has given fascinating glimpses of it. It was in 1835 that Tennyson and Fitzgerald went to visit Spedding at his home near Bassenthwaite Water, under Skiddaw, and if you ever walk from Keswick to Bassenthwaite Water, a pretty but rather lonely walk, you may like to recall some of the memories of this merry visit to beguile the way. "The friends rambled about, talked, smoked, read. Late at night in the silent house, Tennyson would declaim, in a voice like the murmur of a pinewood, out of a little red book, some of the poems afterwards to become immortal. Spedding was not to read aloud, because Tennyson said that he read too much, as if he had bees about his mouth. Old Mr. Spedding showed a practical man's contempt for the whole business. 'Well, Mr. Fitzgerald,' he would say, 'and what is it?

A Book of Hours

Mr. Tennyson reads, and Jim criticises, is that it?' Tennyson was sulky and wouldn't go to Rydal Mount to see Wordsworth, although Wordsworth was hospitably inclined toward him. Both Spedding and Fitzgerald amused themselves by making sketches of Tennyson, reproduced in Lord Tennyson's life of his father."

This letter of Fitzgerald's recalls their visit to Ambleside, where they spent a week after the visit to Spedding:

" Manchester, May 23, 1835.

" Dear Allen: Alfred Tennyson stayed with me at Ambleside. I will say no more of Tennyson than that the more I have seen of him, the more cause I have had to think him great. His little humors and grumpinesses were so droll that I was always laughing: I must, however, say further that I felt what Charles Lamb described a sense of depression at times from the overshadowing of a so much more lofty intellect than my own: this (though it may seem vain to say so) I have never experienced before, though I have often been with much greater intellects; but I could not be mistaken in the universality of his mind; and perhaps I have received some benefit in the now more than distinct consciousness of my dwarfishness. I think you should keep all this to yourself, my dear

Edward Fitzgerald and His Friends

Allen: I mean that it is only to you that I would write so freely about myself. You know most of my secrets, and I am not afraid of intrusting even my vanities to so true a man."

Fitzgerald to Tennyson:

"I have heard you say that you are bound by the want of such and such a sum, and I vow to the Lord that I could not have a greater pleasure than in transferring it to you on such an occasion. I could not dare say such a thing to a smaller man; but you are not a small man assuredly; and even if you do not make use of my offer, you will not be offended, but put it to the right account. It is very difficult to persuade people in this world that one can part with a banknote without a pang."

Then he writes of Tennyson:

"Resting our oars one calm day on Windermere, at the end of May, 1835, and looking into the lake quite unruffled and clear, Alfred quoted from the lines he had lately read from the manuscript 'Morte d'Arthur' about the lonely lady of the lake and Excalibur:

*Nine years she wrought it, sitting in the deeps
Upon the hidden bases of the hills.*

and he would remark, 'Not bad that, Fitz, is it'?"

A Book of Hours

While they were in the lake country they met Hartley Coleridge, who was mightily taken with Tennyson, and wrote a sonnet to him.

The Fitzgeralds had had a country home at Wherstend, near Ipswich, for many years, but in 1835 Mr. John Fitzgerald removed to Boulge Hall, about two and a half miles from Woodbridge, a spacious Queen Anne house, surrounded by fine trees. The River Deben winds through the meadows of flowers.

I have already said enough, I am sure, to show you that Fitzgerald had no share in the ambitious strivings of the time. Soon after his family removed to Boulge Hall he had a desire to have a den of his own, and he took up his abode in a little thatched lodge of two rooms standing near the Boulge Gate. Here, with a cat and dog and parrot, he began what he called a very pleasant Robinson-Crusoe sort of life. He was waited upon by an old couple. He installed his books and pictures in the cottage. The place was a scene of desperate confusion; "he led a thoroughly indolent life, though with dreams of literary ambition."

He was fond of inviting Barton and Crabbe to his cottage, calling them "the wits of Wood-

Edward Fitzgerald and His Friends

bridge." About the time that the Fitzgeralds went to Boulge Hall to live, George Crabbe, the son of the poet, was appointed to the living of Budfield near by, and he and Edward became great friends, and Fitzgerald, too, was on terms of intimate friendship with Bernard Barton, the poet, whose greatest claim to fame is that he was the friend and correspondent of Lamb, that many of Lamb's most delightful letters were addressed to him.

Before 1842, when Fitzgerald's acquaintance with Carlyle began, there are sundry amusing references to Carlyle's works in Fitzgerald's letters. He writes to Bernard Barton: "I'm trying to get through a new book much in fashion—Carlyle's 'French Revolution'—written in a German style. An Englishman writes of French Revolution in a German style! People say the book is very deep; but it appears to me that the meaning seems deep from lying under mystical language."

To Thompson (afterwards Master of Trinity) he writes: "Have you read poor Carlyle's raving book about heroes? Of course you have, or I would ask you to buy my copy. I don't like to live with it in the house. It smolders!" But

A Book of Hours

it was not long after writing thus that Fitzgerald met "Gurlyle," as Thackeray called the Sage of Chelsea. Thackeray never seemed content until he had transformed a name into some less conventional form. It was under Thackeray's wing that Fitzgerald called upon Carlyle in 1842. I have told you that Fitzgerald's father owned the estate which included the battlefield of Naseby. When Carlyle was writing his life of Cromwell he had visited the field, and an obelisk erected by Fitzgerald's father merely to mark the highest ground, they had supposed marked the place where the hottest engagement took place, and had gone away satisfied, not having surveyed the real battlefield at all. Fitzgerald, guided by local tradition, conducted some excavations at Naseby, and found the remains of many skeletons. Carlyle was much excited by the discoveries, but Fitzgerald did not care much for "bone rummaging," as he called it, and did not continue the excavations.

Fitzgerald continued to live at the little lodge, reading, writing, and visiting his humble country friends. In 1849 Bernard Barton died, leaving his daughter very ill-provided for. Fitzgerald appears to have promised Bernard

Edward Fitzgerald and His Friends

Barton that the daughter should be provided for, and this was looked upon as tantamount to an offer of marriage. I think I will dispose of that matter at once. Fitzgerald married Lucy Barton, but it was a most unfortunate affair; they were altogether unsuited to each other, and in a few weeks they separated, Fitzgerald making a very handsome settlement upon her, and no blame attached to either, except it had been so much better had they never had the unhappy experience.

When Fitzgerald's brother John succeeded to the estates in 1851, Edward retreated from his cottage; he could not bear the proximity of his brother, with whom he had no tastes in common, and he went to live at Farlingay Hall, near Woodbridge. In 1854 Carlyle, being overworked, announced his intention of coming to stay with Fitzgerald. It is mingled amusement and consternation that Fitzgerald feels at the prospect of entertaining the sage, and he writes to Mrs. Carlyle: "Only, dear Mrs. Carlyle, let me know what Carlyle is to Eat, Drink, and Avoid!" Carlyle writes, with entire absence of thought for anybody except himself: "It will be pleasant to see your face at the end of my

A Book of Hours

shrieking, mad (and to me quite horrible) rail operations. I hope to get to Farlingay not long after four o'clock, and have a quiet mutton-chop in due time, and have a ditto pipe or pipes; nay, I could even have a bathe if there was any sea water left in the evening."

Carlyle afterwards wrote that Fitzgerald "discharged the sacred rites of hospitality with a kind of Irish zeal or piety." Fitzgerald himself was a vegetarian, and most abstemious liver; but in no way required others to follow his regimen. When he had guests, he would regale them upon the best that could be had—oysters and ale—while he himself would pace up and down the room munching an apple or a turnip, and drinking long draughts of milk.

Living his secluded life, Fitzgerald saw very few of his old friends, and he and Thackeray drifted apart, but though they almost never wrote during the last years of Thackeray's life, we have the sweetest proof that Thackeray cherished Fitzgerald's friendship. Toward the close of his life his daughter asked him which of his friends he cared most for, and he answered: "Why, dear old Fitz, to be sure, and Brook-

Edward Fitzgerald and His Friends

field." And then do you not all remember the letter that Thackeray wrote Fitzgerald on the eve of his departure for America? A letter I have read so many, many times, and never without swelling throat.

"I should like my daughters to remember that you are the best and oldest friend their father ever had, and that you should act as such, as my literary executor, and so forth. Does not this sound gloomy? Well, who knows what Fate has in store, and I feel not at all downcast, and very grave and solemn, just at the brink of a great voyage—and the great comfort I have in thinking about my dear old boy is that recollection of our youth when we loved each other, as I now do while I write farewell."

And after Thackeray's death, Fitzgerald writes to Samuel Lawrence, in 1864:

"I am surprised almost to find how much I am thinking of him; so little as I had seen him for the last ten years; not once for the last five. I had been told—by you, for one—that he was spoiled. I am glad therefore that I have scarce seen him since he was 'old Thackeray.' I keep reading his 'Newcomes' of nights, and, as it were, hear him saying so much in it; and it seems to me as if he might be coming up my

A Book of Hours

stairs and about to come (singing) into my room, as in Old Charlotte Street thirty years ago."

To Thompson, of Trinity, he writes:

"My interest in him is a little gone from hearing he had become somewhat spoiled; which, also, some of his later writings hinted to me of themselves. But his letters and former works bring me back the old Thackeray. I had never read 'Pendennis' and 'The Newcomes' since their appearance till this last month. They are wonderful. Fielding's seems to me coarse work in comparison. I have, indeed, been thinking of little this last month but of these Books and their Author. Of his Letters to me, I have kept some Dozen, just to mark the different Epochs of our Acquaintance."

And this in reference to Anne Thackeray:

"Just as I was going out of the Royal Academy, who should come up to me but Annie Thackeray, who took my hands as really glad to see her father's old friend. I am sure she was, and I was taken aback somehow and, out of sheer awkwardness, began to tell her that I didn't care for her new Novel! And then, after she had left her party to come to me, she ran off."

Could we have a better picture of the shy

Edward Fitzgerald and His Friends

recluse than this self-revelation in the letter? He was overcome with a sense of his apparent unfriendliness, then he went back to the Academy to look up Anne Thackeray, but could not find her. "I have been so vexed with myself!" and it is easy to fancy the vexation that the kindly, friendly man felt at the awkwardness of it all.

But Fitzgerald himself was to live on many years—twenty years after the death of Thackeray. In 1860 he came to Woodbridge to live, in the market place over the gunsmith's. How much interest one has in that market place! Here he lived for more than a dozen years. In the meantime he bought a place just on the edge of the village, which he called Little Grange, but he seemed disinclined to use it, and for years it was left to the occupancy of his nieces and such relatives as liked to use it for a few months of the year; even when he went there to live, he kept but one room for himself.

But as one waits at the Bull Inn for a trap to drive out to Boulge she may likely recall to herself some of the stories she has heard of the famous host of the inn. There Tennyson and his son visited Fitzgerald. His house undergo-

A Book of Hours

ing repairs, he put them up at the Bull. Woodbridge should feel honored, Fitzgerald told the landlord, and the landlord asked Archdeacon Groome for explanation, and the archdeacon said: "He is the Poet Laureate," and the landlord said indifferently: "He may be that, but he doesn't fare to know much about horses, I showed him my stables!"

And when one explores the market place, she looks for the rooms over the gunsmith's where Fitzgerald lodged for years with Berry. But Berry became engaged to a widow, and Fitzgerald most impolitically remarked that "Old Berry would now have to be called 'Old Gooseberry.'" This unwise remark was repeated to the widow, and the result was that Fitzgerald was ordered to quit. Berry had some compunction about turning out his old friend and lodger, but the widow, fearing that his courage would give way, remained at the bottom of the stairs, calling out: "Be firm, Berry! Remind him of what he called you."

During these Woodbridge days he spent much time on the sea, which he always loved, and which he best loved when it was rough. In the summer months he spent a deal of time cruis-

Edward Fitzgerald and His Friends

ing about in his yacht, which he named "The Scandal," because, he said, that was the principal product of Woodbridge. He was sometimes accompanied by a friend or two, and always by plenty of books. It was in the cabin of his boat that he translated much of Calderon and Æschylus.

Fitzgerald was not a traveler, and some very apocryphal stories are told apropos of his in-curiosity and unwillingness to change from his usual course. It is told that he made a sailing trip over to Holland to see Paul Potter's "Bull"—but when he arrived in Rotterdam there was such a good breeze for returning to England that he immediately set sail for home, and didn't go to The Hague at all. It's a capital story, but his own experience was a little different—though he did not see The Hague Gallery. He went to The Hague, but the gallery was closed and was not to be opened the next day—"So in Rage and Despair I tore back to Rotterdam."

So Fitzgerald, "the peaceable, affectionate, and ultra-modest man," as Carlyle calls him, lived his innocent *far niente* life. He enjoined upon his friends not to come out of their way to call on him, but if they were passing through

A Book of Hours

to call. One day Tennyson was passing through and called—but let Fitzgerald himself tell it, as he does in one of his delightful letters to Fanny Kemble:

“ And now, who should send in his card to me last week—but the old Poet himself—he and his elder son, Hallam, passing through Woodbridge from a tour in Norfolk. ‘ Dear old Fitz,’ ran the card in pencil. ‘ I am passing thro’.’ I had not seen him in twenty years, and what really surprised me was that we fell at once into the old humor, as if we had only been parted twenty days instead of so many years. He stayed two days, and went over the same old grounds of debate, told some of the same old stories, and so all was well. I suppose I may never see him again, and so I suppose both thought as the Rail carried him away. I liked Hallam much, unaffected, unpretending, no slang, none of young England’s *nonchalance*, speaking of his Father as Papa, never calling him Governor, and tending him with great care, love, and discretion.”

Lord Tennyson in the memoir of his father has given a pleasant account of this visit. He says the views that Fitzgerald expressed on literature were interesting, but the old man never

Edward Fitzgerald and His Friends

got off his own platform to look at the work of modern authors. Hallam Tennyson says somewhere that Fitzgerald never approved of anything his friends wrote unless he first saw it in manuscript. He surely did not let his friendliness blind him to qualities to which his literary standard objected. "Old Fitzcrochet!" he calls himself in a letter to Tennyson, when he is writing some strictures on "Queen Mary."—"Still your old Fitzcrochet, you see! And so will be to the end, I suppose." And while Tennyson was visiting him at Woodbridge he told the poet frankly that he had written nothing worth while since 1842, adding that he had ceased to be a poet and become an artist.

Tennyson seemed to be much impressed by the picture of Fitzgerald sitting under the trees at Little Grange, and the pigeons alighting on Fitzgerald's head, courtesying and cooing, and he put the scene in the dedication to "Tiresias."

But before the poem was published Fitzgerald had been taken to his last rest under the tower of the little church of Boulge. He had fallen asleep on the night of June 14, 1883, and in the morning his friend found it was the last sleep. Then Tennyson added an epilogue to the

A Book of Hours

poem, which concludes, you remember, with the line:

One height and one far-shining fire.

This is the dedication:

*Old Fitz, who from your suburb grange,
Where once I tarried for a while,
Glance at the wheeling orb of change,
And greet it with a kindly smile;
Whom yet I see as there you sit
Beneath your sheltering garden tree,
And while your doves about you flit,
And plant on shoulder, hand, and knee,
Or on our head their rosy feet,
As if they knew your diet spares
Whatever moved in that full sheet,
Let down to Peter at his prayers;
Who live on milk and meal and grass,
And once for ten long weeks I tried
Your table of Pythagoras.
And seem'd at first a thing enskied,
(As Shakespeare has it) airy light
To float above the ways of men,
Then fell from that half-spiritual height,
Chill'd till I tasted flesh again.
One night when Earth was winter-black,
And all the heavens flashed in frost;
And on me, half-asleep, came back
That wholesome heat the flood had lost,*

Edward Fitzgerald and His Friends

*And set me climbing icy capes
And glaciers, over which there roll'd
To meet me long-arm'd vines with grapes
Of Eschol hugeness; for the cold
Without and warmth within me wrought
To mold the dream; but none can say
That Lenten fare makes Lenten thought
Who reads your golden Eastern lay
Than which I know no version done
In English more divinely well;
A planet equal to the sun
Which cast it, that large infidel,
Your Omar, and your Omar drew
Full-handed plaudits from our best
In modern letters, and from two
Old friends outvaluing all the rest,
Two voices heard on earth no more;
But we old friends are still alive,
And I am nearing seventy-four,
While you have touched at seventy-five,
And so I send a birthday line
Of greeting; and my son, who dipt
In some forgotten book of mine
With sallow scraps of manuscript,
And dating many a year ago,
Has hit on this which you take,
My Fitz, and welcome, as I know
Less for its own than for the sake
Of one recalling gracious times*

A Book of Hours

*When, in our younger London days,
You found some merit in my rhymes
And I more pleasure in your praise.
One heigt and one far-shining fire.*

Then the epilogue :

*And while I fancied that my friend
For this brief idyll would require
A less diffuse and opulent end,
And would defend his judgment well
If I should deem it overnice,
The tolling of his funeral bell
Broke on my pagan Paradise,
And mixed the dreams of classic times
And all the phantoms of the dream,
With present grief, and made the rhymes
That miss'd his living welcome seem
Like would-be guests, an hour too late
Who down the highway moving on
With easy laughter, find the gate
Is bolted and the master gone.
Gone into darkness, full light
Of friendship! fast, in sleep, away
By night, into the deeper night!*

I thought it well to round out the tale of this friendship, though I yet had more to tell you of Fitzgerald. For nearly threescore years these men had been friends, and Tennyson, like

Edward Fitzgerald and His Friends

Thackeray, gave a first place to "dear old Fitz."

During the last dozen years of his life Fitzgerald wrote many letters to Fanny Kemble, and they are published by themselves in a most readable volume. When Mrs. Kemble in her "Old Woman's Gossip" wrote some memories of the Fitzgeralds, Edward begged that when they were given book form the passage relating to him should be dropped, as the world would scarcely care to know of him, and he did not deserve her words. In his own copy of her work he pasted over the pages relating to himself. But since Mrs. Kemble so delightfully summarizes his life, I am going to give it as a brief recapitulation, particularly as she itemizes what I have designedly omitted—all his literary work.

"One member of the family, Edward Fitzgerald, has remained my friend till this day. His parents and mine are dead. Of his brothers and sisters I retain no knowledge, but with him I still keep up an affectionate and, to me, valuable and interesting correspondence. He was distinguished from the rest of his family, and, indeed, from most people, by the possession of very rare intellectual and artistic gifts. A poet, a painter, a musician, an admirable scholar and writer, if

A Book of Hours

he had not shunned notoriety as sedulously as most people seek it, he would have achieved a foremost place among the eminent men of his day, and left a name second to that of very few of his contemporaries. His life was spent in literary leisure, or literary labors of love of singular excellence, which he never cared to publish beyond the circle of his intimate friends. 'Euphranor' and 'Polonius' are full of keen wisdom, fine observation and profound thought, sterling philosophy, written in the purest, simplest, and raciest English; noble translations or rather free adaptations of Calderon's finest dramas, a splendid paraphrase of the 'Agamemnon' of Æschylus, which fills the reader with regret that he should not have *Englished* the whole of the great trilogy with the same severe sublimity. In America, this gentleman is better known by his translation or adaptation (how much more it is his own than the author's, I should like to know if I were Irish) of Omar Khayyam, the astronomer poet of Persia. While these were Edward Fitzgerald's studies and pursuits, he led a curious life of almost entire estrangement from society, preferring the companionship of the rough sailors and fishermen of the Suffolk coast to that of lettered folk. He lived with them in the most friendly intimacy, helping them in their sea ventures and cruising about with one, an especially fine sample of his sort, in a small fishing smack,

Edward Fitzgerald and His Friends

which Edward Fitzgerald's bounty had set afloat, and in which the translator of Calderon and Æchylus passed his time, better pleased with the intercourse of the captain and crew of his small fishing craft than with that of more educated and sophisticated humanity."

There is one word in Mrs. Kemble's article to which I object, and that is *estrangement*. It might be inferred from that, although that implying was not Mrs. Kemble's intention, that he was at war with his fellows, or that he was a misanthrope, and we that know Fitzgerald know how true is Mr. Groome's statement: "There was a vein of misanthropy toward men in the abstract, but tender-hearted sympathy for actual men and women; being the reverse of Carlyle's description of the philanthropist, 'One who loves man in the abstract, but is intolerant of Jack and Tom.'"

There is one of Fitzgerald's friends of whom I have made no mention, whose influence on Fitzgerald was most significant, and to whom indirectly we owe thanks for the exquisite quatrains which make Fitzgerald's most important literary work. It was as early as 1846 that Fitzgerald made the acquaintance of Mr. Cowell,

A Book of Hours

afterwards Professor of Sanskrit at Cambridge. Professor Cowell had great gifts for literature, and it was he that introduced Fitzgerald to Omar Khayyam. Professor Cowell said humorously of himself that his chief function was to encourage other people to work. Fitzgerald began to read the Oriental poets with Cowell, and in 1856 "he was working in his easy way at Omar Khayyam, reading, enjoying, and adapting."

It seems to me so entirely unnecessary to tell you any of the circumstances regarding the publishing of Fitzgerald's wonderful free adaptations from Omar Khayyam. It surely can have escaped no one's knowing, all the detail has been told again and again in introductions to editions of the "Rubaiyat," and there remains nothing new to be told. The first edition was published by Quaritch in 1859, and fell perfectly flat, so that the undesired books were offered among a lot of unsalable volumes—with the legend, "All these a penny each." Then the next chapter in the romance is that two young poets, Rossetti was one, chanced upon the undesired book, and, discovering its rare worth, invested several pennies, and the book was talked about

Edward Fitzgerald and His Friends

among their friends. When one of those little books of 1859 strays into the hands of a bookseller now, he knows he may demand any price he will for it. I have not followed the buying and selling of this issue of 1859, but I remember very well that in 1898 rather more than a hundred dollars was paid for one of the little volumes, and Mr. Quaritch, the original publisher, was the purchaser.

The edition was unsigned, and Carlyle was twelve years finding out that his friend Fitzgerald was the translator of Omar, and the circumstances are interesting. In September, 1863, Mr. Ruskin addressed a letter to the translator of the Rubaiyat of Omar, which he intrusted to Mrs. Burne-Jones, who, after an interval of nearly ten years, handed it to Mr. Charles Eliot Norton. By him it was transmitted to Carlyle, who sent it to Fitzgerald with the following letter:

“ Chelsea, 14 April, 1873.

“ Dear Fitzgerald: Mr. Norton ” (he speaks in most complimentary terms of Mr. Norton), “ with whom I have had pleasant walks, dialogues, and other communications of late months, in the course of which he brought to my knowledge for the first time your notable

A Book of Hours

'Omar Khayyam,' insisted on giving me a copy from the third edition, which I now possess and duly prize. From him, too, by careful cross-questioning, I identified, beyond dispute, the hidden Fitzgerald, the translator; and indeed found that his complete silence and unique modesty in regard to said meritorious and successful performance was simply a feature of my own Edward F! The translation is excellent; the book itself a kind of jewel in its way; I do Norton's mission without the least delay, as you perceive. Ruskin's message to you passes through my hands sealed. I am ever your affectionate

"T. Carlyle."

Then ten years after Ruskin's writing Fitzgerald wrote his thanks.

After the third edition, his friend, W. B. Donne wrote: "I am so delighted at the glory Edward Fitzgerald has gained by his translation of the 'Rubaiyat' of Omar Khayyam. It is full time that Fitz should be disinterred and exhibited to the world as one of the most gifted of Britons."

Not only do you know all the circumstances attending the publication, but you know all about Omar, the tentmaker, as his poetical name tells us he was at one time. He was an astrono-

Edward Fitzgerald and His Friends

mer-poet of Persia, in the eleventh century, who, as Fitzgerald put it, "having failed (however mistakenly) of finding any Providence but Destiny, and any world but this, set about making the best of it, preferring rather to soothe the soul through the senses into acquiescence with things as he saw them than to perplex it with vain disquietude after what might be."

I like to call to the attention of readers of the quatrains that Omar was living at the time of the Battle of Hastings, that event so meaningful to all English-speaking people.

*Yea thou wert singing when that arrow clave
Through helm and brain of him
Who could not save
His England, even of Harold, Godwin's
son.
The high tide murmurs by the hero's grave.*

*His was the age of Faith, when all the West
Looked to the priest for torment or for rest;
And thou wert living then, and didst not heed
The Saint who banned thee, or the Saint who
blessed.*

How matchless is the first quatrain as it was in the first edition:

A Book of Hours

*Awake! for Morning in the Bowl of Night,
Has flung the Stone that puts the Stars to
Flight.*

*And Lo! the Hunter of the East has caught
The Sultan's Turret in a Noose of Light.*

There are five hundred or more of the "Rubaiyat" of Omar, but Fitzgerald has given about a hundred in his final and fourth edition; he says many of the quatrains "are mashed together and something lost, I doubt not, of Omar's simplicity." A commentator (Way) says: "What modesty! Fitzgerald has *crystallized* the five hundred quatrains of the original into the one hundred and one of the fourth edition."

But had he not given us his beautiful quatrains he would still have given hostage for our love and admiration in his letters, one of the most delightful collections in existence. I most advisedly gave this hour the name "With Edward Fitzgerald and his Friends in East Anglia and Elsewhere," after thinking what would probably be included in and omitted from the hour. While I had no intention to ignore Fitzgerald's literary work, I was without intention to emphasize it. It was my wish to emphasize

Edward Fitzgerald and His Friends

his friendships, which, I think, are among the most interesting and tenderly endearing in the range of English literature. Not only do they make Fitzgerald more interesting, but they reveal a depth of sweet friendliness in each of his friends. I love to spend my time in the friendly atmosphere of Fitzgerald's letters. It is not alone for his spirit, but the reflection of the spirit of friendship in others.

Although Fitzgerald's life was spent for the most part in East Anglia, we have seen that Cambridge will have an added interest if we recall the remarkable group of young men that were undergraduates at Trinity at the beginning of the second quarter of the nineteenth century; that among the literary associations of Lake Land we may recall the visit of Tennyson and Fitzgerald, when Tennyson's early gems were in the process of making, and I could have told you of meeting after meeting in London with all these beloved people. There was one notable day when Thackeray, Dickens, Tennyson, and Fitzgerald went driving together—"a precious carriageful," Fitzgerald comments.

One of Fitzgerald's last journeys was to Chelsea, about a month before his death, and his

A Book of Hours

mention of the visit is in the last letters he wrote to Mrs. Kemble and to Professor Norton: "I wanted to see the statue on the embankment and the old No. 5 Cheyne Row, which I had not seen for five-and-twenty years. The statue I thought very good, though looking somewhat small and ill set off by its dingy surroundings. And No. 5 (now 24), which had cost Jane Carlyle so much of her life to make habitable for him, now all neglected, unswept, ungarnished, uninhabited, 'To Let.' " He was greatly moved by these scenes and the memories they evoked.

My last visit to these Chelsea shrines was the happiest I have ever made. The Carlyle house is now a memorial, and why the special privilege was vouchsafed us I know not, but my friends and I were invited to tea in the kitchen—in the very kitchen where Carlyle and Tennyson had smoked their pipes in absolute silence and had such a thoroughly enjoyable evening.

But to return to East Anglia, the country that Fitzgerald loved and knew, its pleasant blossoming meadows, its winding streams and sheltering nooks. It is the country of the two great English landscapists, Constable and Gainsborough; both were East Anglians, and repeatedly

Edward Fitzgerald and His Friends

portrayed on canvas the beauties of their native corner of England.

Fitzgerald was much interested in the racy vernacular of East Anglia, and made careful study of it; his knowledge of the fisher folk was so intimate that Tennyson applied to him for detail when he was writing "Enoch Arden." To me, recalling East Anglia, with its many waterways and its abundance of flowers, it seems most suited to Fitzgerald, with his delight in boating, and his love for flowers; always I think of it as "a pleasant water'd land, a land of roses."

Mr. Groome describes Fitzgerald as "a tall sea-bronzed man. He could be seen later in life walking down into Woodbridge with an old Inverness cape, slippers on feet, and a handkerchief tied over his hat; yet one always recognized in him the Hidalgo. Never was there a more perfect gentleman; eccentric he certainly was, as was all his family."

I was guest in an old Flemish house in Spanish Ipswich, whose ceilings were adorned with cherubs and lilies and roses which marked the decoration of the early seventeenth century, and after my days of roaming about the country I met in the evening people who remembered Fitz-

A Book of Hours

gerald, his oddities, his kindnesses, and his appearance, as he went about wrapped in his Inverness cape.

It was a very pleasant summer day when I went out to Boulge churchyard to visit the grave of Fitzgerald. A beautiful path shaded with magnificent trees leads to the church, and in the small yard one easily finds the grave of Edward Fitzgerald—simply marked with date of birth and death, and the verse: "It is He that hath made us and not we ourselves." On the grave there was blooming a rose, whose parent tree grew over the grave of Omar Khayyam at Naishapur—the most poetic tribute that poets could make to a poet, I have always thought.

Ten years after Fitzgerald died the Omar Khayyam Club planted the rose tree over Fitzgerald's grave, Theodore Watts Dunton giving these lines:

*Hear us, ye winds, North, East and West and
South!*

*This granite covers him whose golden mouth
Made wiser ev'n the work of wisdom's King,
Blow softly o'er the grave of Omar's herald,
Till roses rich of Omar's dust shall spring
From richer dust of Suffolk's rare Fitzgerald.*

OXFORD'S WALKS AND GARDENS

WHEN I ask you to listen to an hour's talk on Oxford, it is not Oxford architecturally or historically that I shall try to present, nor is it the history of any one college, nor yet the university, but it is Oxford of romantic and literary memories, entirely distinct from the life and action of to-day. Obviously, the contemporary and undergraduate will have no part in my tale, but yesterday's poet, the hero of bygone tale, the heroine of centuries of tradition—these are they whom I wish to bring before you.

To attempt to give any notion of the charm of Oxford is entirely vain. "Know you the secret none can utter?" the poet asks. Though many know the secret—that is, many know the charm of Oxford—I have never yet known it adequately set forth. A brief phrase is often happier in suggestion of Oxford's great charm than a long description. Cardinal Newman says

A Book of Hours

of the city he so loved: "As beautiful as youth, as venerable as age." Beauty and age do contribute to the charm. Matthew Arnold, another son of Oxford, says: "Lovely at all times she lies, lovely to-night." "That sweet city with its dreaming spires," says William Morris.

I know several vantage grounds, Mesopotamia, Headington Hill, Shotover, sometimes Magdalen Bridge, from which I have realized Andrew Lang's sentiment, "Oxford looks like a fairy city of the Arabian Nights, a town of palaces and princesses, rather than proctors."

I shall conclude this hour with a mention of Matthew Arnold's threnodies which enshrine the beautiful country about Oxford, and it will not be inappropriate if here at the beginning of the hour I call to your mind a prose tribute he has paid to Oxford. He is speaking of the search for truth, and says: "We are all seekers still! Seekers often make mistakes, and I wish mine to redound to my own discredit only, and not to touch Oxford. Beautiful city! So venerable, so lovely, so unravaged by the fierce intellectual life of our century, so serene! And yet steeped in sentiment as she lies, spreading her gardens to the moonlight, and whispering from her tow-

Oxford's Walks and Gardens

ers the last enchantments of the Middle Ages, who will deny that Oxford, by her ineffable charm keeps ever calling us nearer to the true goal of all of us, to the ideal, to perfection, to beauty, in a word, which is only truth seen from another side? ” This is from the preface to the first series of “ *Essays on Criticism*.”

“ It is the Oxford that lies spreading its gardens to the moonlight and whispering from its towers the last enchantment of the Middle Ages ” that has the special appeal to me. I know Oxford at several seasons, during Term, when the usual aspect of Term is on, when it is resplendent with color and full of the animated joyous company attracted by Eights; but I prefer it when the college barges are deserted, and the rivers are left to the resident Oxonian, and the city is wrapped in the drowsiness of the Long Vacation.

In Charles Lamb's essay, “ *Oxford in Vacation*,” he speaks of the sense of possession that one has in walking through the colleges and gardens in vacation. Indulging in one of his pleasant concerts, he says that if one in his youth has been denied the sweets of academic instruction, he may here play the gentleman, enact the stu-

A Book of Hours

dent, fancy himself of any degree or calling he pleases. In a mood of humility, he may enact the servitor; if the peacock vein rises, he may strut a gentleman commoner, or in grave moments proceed master of arts.

It was not in fancying myself in various stations that I had my greatest pleasure, as I strolled unmolested about Oxford, "peeped into sculleries redolent of antique hospitality and looked at spits which had cooked for Chaucer." It was not myself in various guises that I saw, but Oxford became a rallying ground for fair women, brave men, the poets, the sages who had known Oxford in the generations ago.

So as I strolled by the Cherwell, of Isis, the rivers that give the beautiful frame to Oxford, or walked under the limes at Trinity, or sat 'neath the giant catalpa at New College, or in the cedar shade of Wadham, or as I climbed the Cumnor Hill or crossed the ferry at Bablock-hythe, although I appeared alone, I had really the best of company—memories of romance, poetry, history, that rush out from one's reading at touch of Oxford.

Oxford lies in low country; it is almost surrounded by the two rivers, the Cherwell and Isis,

Oxford's Walks and Gardens

as the Thames is called where it flows past the University. I think no people love their rivers more than do the Oxonians, and in summer

*Young and old come forth to play,
On a sunshine holiday.*

Many a time I have seen a family party, in which several generations have been represented, give over the day to the river, the Cherwell preferred for its quiet, sequestered nooks. It is delightful to row along the sinuous river, lilies float on the surface, the trees bend and dip over the river, here and there are clumps of beautiful forget-me-not, may be, and when I have seen a hand go out to pluck it, I have uttered the restraining "Don't," because I am Emersonian to the degree that I can "love the wild rose and leave it on its stalk." The Thames about Oxford has numberless attractions.

Iffley is not far away; if one walks along the turning path she comes ere long to this mill, so many times the subject of the artist's pencil, the poet's pen, and if we have come to the mill we shall be unwise if we do not go once again to Iffley Church, though it may be for the twentieth time. It is a most interesting old Norman

A Book of Hours

church, the stone carving of the doors being unusually interesting. Of many visits here, one stands out with especial clearness—it was a day in Eights' Week when I spent a serene hour here watching the starlings build in the wall and tower. Antiquarian taste, this bird has to select the Norman structure for nesting. The busy little house builder gave never an eye to the solitary under the yew, but builded on and on. The cuckoo shouted, and here amidst the flowers and birds I had a happy hour.

Here are some bits farther up the river at Nuneham Courtney, which I have reached by boat or by walking, the picturesque cottages I would go far to see were there no other feature that is attractive.

Now, if you will trust to my guidance, I shall like to take you about Oxford, strolling about its walks and rambling through its gardens, and we will start from my favorite rooms in Hollywell Street directly opposite one of the entrances to New College Gardens, and I shall resist the allurements of New College Garden this time, but perhaps remembering to tell you that a part of the ancient wall of Oxford is incorporated into the wall of New College Garden.

Oxford's Walks and Gardens

Our first objective point is Magdalen Bridge—and here I shall begin my rehearsal of associations after I call your attention to that name “Maudlin,” the universal pronunciation, although my landlady, a most delightful creature, says: “I say Magdalen, but the silly softs, they say ‘Maudlin.’” However, the silly softs are the ruling majority, and it was only on that one occasion that I ever knew her superior to the rest of the world.

Of Magdalen College and its association I shall speak later, but here on Magdalen Bridge I am very likely to recall Shelley, who was an undergraduate at University College during the short time that he was in residence in Oxford. University College, according to tradition, was founded by Alfred the Great. We have most interesting glimpses of Shelley given by his friend Thomas Jefferson Hogg, who was his college friend, and shared Shelley's expulsion when his too-daring views made his presence undesired by college authorities.

“ One Sunday we had been reading Plato together so diligently that the usual hour of exercise passed away unperceived; we sallied forth hastily to take the air for half an hour before

A Book of Hours

dinner. In the middle of Magdalen Bridge we met a woman with a child in her arms. Shelley was more attentive to our conduct in a life that was past, or to come, than to a decorous regulation of the present. With abrupt dexterity he caught hold of the child. The mother, who might well fear that it was about to be thrown over the parapet of the bridge into the sedgy waters below, held it fast by its long train. 'Will your baby tell us anything about preëxistence, madam?' he asked with a piercing tone and wistful look. The mother made no reply, but perceiving Shelley's object was not murderous, but altogether harmless, she dismissed her apprehensions, and relaxed her hold. 'Will your baby tell us anything about preëxistence, madam?' he repeated with unabated earnestness. 'He cannot speak, sir,' said the mother earnestly, and said further that he was only a few weeks old. Shelley's argument that that was only a greater reason why he should *tell* about preëxistence met with no comprehension from the mother, who firmly asserted, 'I have never heard him speak, *nor any child* of his age.' "

The walks about Oxford are increasingly in-

Oxford's Walks and Gardens

teresting to us when we know that every inch of the ground was known to these two young men. In the rivers and lakelets about, Shelley used to indulge his peculiar whim for sailing paper boats. He would start out with a book, its fly-leaf would go to make the boat. The story is told that, all other paper lacking, he resorted to bank notes, but Hogg says that is a myth. In the Bodleian Library, with its rich treasures, to me one of the most interesting collections is the case of Shelley relics, a miniature showing the marvelous fairness of the young poet, personal possessions of one kind or another, but the chief interest was the volume of Sophocles that was found in Shelley's pocket when the body was washed on the Italian shore after the capsizing of the ill-starred *Ariel*. I have thought how interesting this case must be to young poets. If I have time later I wish to come to Shelley once again to tell you of his favorite walk, worthily the favorite walk of any poet or lover of the beautiful, the walk over Shotover Plain, but from University College it is but a step to Oriel, which we need not pass from any lack of association, and to me the chiefest interest is that Dr. Newman was here a tutor and fellow.

A Book of Hours

It is not the polemical work of Newman that I recall, but what I have heard of his personal charm and grace. He is inseparably associated with a great religious movement. Before he came to Oriel he was an undergraduate at Trinity. Whenever the lover of all things that are quiet and gentle and true, in life and literature, visits Oxford, he will find himself wondering whether the snapdragon still grows outside the windows of the rooms in Trinity where once lived the author of the "Apologia." It is these poetic associations of Cardinal Newman that abound in Oxford. In the church of St. Mary the Virgin I think of the picture that Matthew Arnold has drawn for us: "Who could resist the charm of that apparition, gliding in the dim afternoon light through the aisles of St. Mary's, rising into the pulpit, and then, in the most entrancing of voices, breaking the silence with words and thoughts which were a religious music—subtle, sweet, mournful? I seem to hear him saying: 'After the fever of life, after wearinesses and sicknesses, fightings and despairings, languor and fretfulness, struggling and succeeding; after all the changes and chances of this troubled, unhealthy state, at length comes death,

Oxford's Walks and Gardens

at length the white throne of God, at length the beautiful vision.' "

But opposite Oriel is an entrance to Christ Church College, and now we will not go lingeringly, because I wish to take you to an humble college, Pembroke. The magnificent church might taunt Pembroke upon its few and humble associations, but cannot Pembroke return? "And is not Johnson ours, himself a host?" That stanch old hero, Samuel Johnson, "whose foibles we care more for than most great men's virtues," was an undergraduate here, and, too, an undergraduate who did not gracefully conform to the rules of his college. He did not consider his tutor of sufficiently good attainments, so he cut the lecture after the first morning. To the civil inquiry of his tutor as to the cause of his absence, he replied: "Sliding on the ice." He was fined twopence. "You have sconced me tuppence for a lecture not worth a penny."

Friend Taylor was at Christ Church opposite. Johnson in going to get Taylor's notes second-hand saw that his ragged shoes were noticed by Christ Church men and went no more. Macaulay says: "He was driven from the quadrangles of Christ Church by the sneering looks

A Book of Hours

which the members of that aristocratical society cast at the holes in his boots. . . .”

I’ve always liked that amusing, forceful passage of Carlyle’s on the story of Johnson’s boots, in which he calls him a “picturesque, ragged servitor.” Dr. Birkbeck Hill, the best Johnson historian to-day, tells us that he was not a servitor.

Johnson always visited his college when he came to Oxford. “The church where Johnson worshiped in the era of Voltaire is a venerable place.” We can see at Oxford the desk where Johnson wrote his dictionary, his manuscript prayers and meditations, and his teapot. To my Johnsonian eye the teapot had great interest, an immense blue and white one. His prowess as a tea drinker is well known. On one occasion he drank five-and-twenty cups, and he described himself as a “hardened and shameless tea drinker—who with tea amuses the evenings, with tea solaces the midnights, and with tea welcomes the mornings.”

On leaving Pembroke, with its association with Johnson, the last literary king, I should take you for a peep at Exeter College, because of two of its men, the most antithetical to John-

Oxford's Walks and Gardens

son, but men who have contributed very much to the art of England and the world, William Morris and Burne-Jones. The building where they had their rooms has been destroyed, but in the chapel of Exeter College is a tapestry designed by Burne-Jones and executed by Morris. Burne-Jones (from King Edward's School at Birmingham) and William Morris (from Marlborough School) took their examinations side by side for Exeter College, and at once became great friends, but none of the Exeter men were in their "set," which was made up almost wholly of Pembroke men who had been Burne-Jones's schoolfellows. They formed a "set" of their own, and as their acquaintance ripened they were not without thought of giving a permanence to their union by forming themselves into a monastic brotherhood, as nearly all of them had at that time the thought of reading for Holy Orders. A book had come out which influenced them very much, and by which they were guiding their lives—"The Heir of Redclyffe." Morris, the wealthiest one of the group, had most shaped his life to conform to the model of the High Church hero, and he meditated using his fortune to found a monastery.

A Book of Hours

But they talked of poetry. Whatever may be the custom of undergraduates to-day, and they say that very little literature is talked of now, fifty years ago, when William Morris and Burne-Jones were at Oxford, they and their friends talked of Tennyson, Keats, Shelley, Milton—talked and read them.

Always, since I first heard of the incident some years ago, have I had a fond memory for the evening when two of the friends, Dixon and Price, of Pembroke, went to Burne-Jones's room, where they found Morris, and Burne-Jones exclaimed wildly, as they entered the room, "He's a big poet!" "Who is?" "Why, Topsy"—the name for Morris among his intimate friends all his life, so dubbed from his mass of dark, curly hair.

But a delicious bit that I cannot refrain from telling you we learn from one of Burne-Jones's letters, written on the first of May, 1853. Then, as now, the time-honored custom of first of May was observed, and an evening's supplementary confusion seems to have been in order in the time of Morris and Burne-Jones, who writes on May day: "Ten o'clock, evening. I have just been pouring basins of water on the crowd below

Oxford's Walks and Gardens

from Dixon's garret—such fun, by Jove!” and then goes on: “I have set my heart on founding a Brotherhood. Learn ‘Sir Galahad’ by heart. He is to be the patron of our Order.” Later he writes: “We must enlist you in this Crusade and Holy Warfare against the Age.” This picture of the social regenerator, the modern Sir Galahad, pouring basins of water on the heads of the passers-by, shows him to have some features in common with other undergraduates.

It is possible I might give you a peep at the rooms that were occupied by Walter Pater—but in this hasty run from college to college I have done what I so decidedly reprehend in others. Visitors often try to see Oxford in a few hours, but when one remembers there are more than twenty colleges as well as numberless other features of interest, it is easy to understand that a brief tarry means, necessarily, a very superficial glance. I had an amusing example of the way Oxford may be seen. One morning a cycling party of three came down the Broad, a gentleman and two ladies. The gentleman had been smoking, but, removing his pipe, holding the bowl in hand and using stem for pointer, he said: “That's the Sheldonian.” “The what?”

A Book of Hours

one of his companions called back. "The Sheldonian," he again told them, and they all cycled on, without vouchsafing a second glance at "The Sheldonian." It is this theater, founded by Archbishop Sheldon, and designed by Christopher Wren, in which is held yearly the Commemoration of Founders and Benefactors, here the honorary degree of D.C.L. is conferred on eminent men whom the university wishes to distinguish. The area is arranged for graduates and strangers—a ladies' gallery, while here are donors', and there the undergraduates' gallery. The undergraduate is an animal very much given to chaff, and pays no respect to persons—to Dr. Holmes: "Did you come in a one-hoss shay?" To Tennyson: "Did your mother call you early?" And to a distinguished don, who was delivering a long Latin eulogy on some departed dignitary: "That will do very well. Now, sir, construe, please."

But the outward appearance of the Oxford colleges gives no suggestion, or at the most, meager suggestion, of the delights there are within. In this way Cambridge differs markedly from the sister university. So many of the Cambridge charms are open to every eye, but Mag-

Oxford's Walks and Gardens

dales College, as it abuts on the street, gives no hint whatever of the wealth within of chapel, cloister, park, garden. A dean of New College, which, by the way, was new in 1379, says: "Our forefathers built in a different spirit from ourselves. They contrived a lowly portal, reserving the best attractions for the interior, and well did they know how to charm the soul that had first entered by the gate of humility."

The college architecture is quadrangular. England has maintained the example set for her by that eminent ecclesiastic and architect, William, of Wyckham, the founder of New College, and entering the portal, one passes through successive quadrangles, each vying with the other in charm.

Let us enter one of these portals, although in this instance it is not a lowly portal; it is the "Faire Gate" of Christ Church. The lower towers are of the time of the founder, Cardinal Wolsey; the upper, Tom Tower, was added in the next century by Wren. The name was originally Cardinal College. Upon the fall of Wolsey, Henry VIII went on with the work, and gave his own name to the foundation; then later it took the name Christ Church College. The

A Book of Hours

quadrangle into which we first come is magnificent in size, and is known by the undignified appellation of Tom Quad. The entire scheme of this college was on a truly magnificent scale, and it is one of the finest, perhaps in many respects it is the finest, academic foundation in Europe. Crossing the quadrangle, we come to the stairway, which leads to the dining hall, a beautiful entrance to a mediæval hall of great beauty, its only rival being Westminster Hall in London. We must linger for a little to notice the fan vaulting of the roof. Here in the hall are portraits of the famous men associated with the college, portraits from the brushes of Holbein, Vandyke, Lely, Kneller, all the painters that have wrought in England since the establishment of the college. Cardinal Wolsey's portrait has not the place of honor over the dais; it is relegated to one side, while Henry VIII looks from the central position. It would weary you were I to tell over the names of the sons of Christ Church. It is considered the most aristocratic of Oxford colleges. It was here that King Edward VII was in residence during the short time he was at Oxford. It is notable, too, for the statesmen it reckons in its numbers. Three succes-

Oxford's Walks and Gardens

sive premiers—Mr. Gladstone, Lord Salisbury, Lord Rosebery—were Christ Church men.

It will illustrate the varying interests of this hall if I tell you a very simple experience of a morning visit. The custodian of the hall is an old man, naturally full of pride in the rich associations of the place as well as in its material richness. We fraternized pleasantly, and one morning I stood on the edge of a group to which he was pointing out some of the interesting portraits. "That is Lewis Carroll," he said very tenderly, and as it met with no response I said, merely because I did not like to see the old man's loving enthusiasm wasted: "'Alice in Wonderland'?" "Yes, 'Alice in Wonderland,'" he said. Of course, Lewis Carroll, who lived for years and years at Christ Church, was a familiar and dear figure to him. One young lady detached herself from the group and said: "Could you, by any chance, tell me at which one of these tables Charles Wesley sat?" Now I could not by any chance tell, nor had I ever even speculated as to the location at table of the great Methodist leader, but her question interested me because it showed what diverse interests may bring one a pilgrim to this hall. It may be of

A Book of Hours

interest to you if I remind you newly that both John and Charles Wesley were of this college.

The cathedral of Oxford is the chapel of Christ Church College, a condition that sometimes leads to complications in the etiquette of precedence; but while one pays many visits here, and grows very much to love this oddly-placed cathedral in the heart of the college buildings, and while its early history is in the fascinatingly remote Saxon times, and its founder is a Saxon saint of the eighth century, I cannot give any further time to this quarter of Oxford, because other places call.

New College is aboundinglly attractive. The entrance is of the lowly portal order, but the ages have poetized this—if you will permit that use of the word—so that this is to me one of the most delightful nooks in the altogether charming city. The chapel, with its window designed by Reynolds, the cloisters and bell tower, the gardens, are as familiar to me as may be, and the gardens are most satisfactory, particularly in early summer, when the great spikes of the chestnut show against the old wall—particularly in later summer, when the foliage is dense, and the “adoring vines” make green the tower and

Oxford's Walks and Gardens

parapets. But I must not exhaust epithet and praise on New College Gardens, because I shall like to have you share with me the delight I have in St. John's Garden, and I know just the season of the year, the hour of the day, that I should wish for your first visit to this spot. It shall not be in early summer, although there would then be flowers without number—the chestnut, the laburnum, the hawthorn—the flowers that are beautiful when the year is young; in May, the walls lack the dense infolding that I love, though there is the purple of the wistaria, the white of the clematis, and the suggestion that spring blossoms are trying to gladden this old wall, and give it a springtime air, but I like it better when summer is advanced, and the maturer vines have a hint now and again in their richness that summer is at its height—so here let us come some rather late summer day, not when the sun is lingering low adown in the red west, but “in the perfect middle of a splendid afternoon”; even then there is an affluence of time, because the English afternoons are so much longer than ours, the shadows are long on the velvety turf, there will be no sound harsher than the chime or a bird note. It realizes a notion of an earthly

A Book of Hours

paradise, and, if my favorite lines are also yours, you will say so heartfely, I am sure:

*Oh, the old wall here! How I could pass
Life in a long midsummer day,
My feet confined to a plot of grass,
My eyes from a wall not once away!
And lush and lithe do the creepers clothe
Low wall I watch, with a wreath of green.*

This wall is the library front, founded by Archbishop Laud, designed by Inigo Jones. There are in this library, if you care to go within, some rather grewsome relics of Laud—the cap in which he was beheaded, the staff which supported him to the scaffold, his episcopal crosier. There is a legend that Laud walks the room; a certain grave historian tells us there is no foundation in that legend—disappointing to me. When Laud was Chancellor of the University he entertained the king and queen, and entire court, here at St. John. There is in this library a portrait of Charles I, having the book of Psalms written on the lines of his face and the hairs of his head. When Charles II was at Oxford he begged this picture, and offered to give them anything they asked in return. They reluc-

Oxford's Walks and Gardens

tantly yielded. "And now what would you like." "The picture back again, please, your Majesty," and Charles restored the portrait—so the story goes.

But Magdalen College shares with St. John the admiration given to pleasant places. The water walks of Magdalen are shaded by ancient trees, and border on the Cherwell that meanders with lazy motion. The *excess* of beauty of St. John and Magdalen has not escaped the critic, Mr. Andrew Lang, who is neither of St. John nor of Magdalen, but of Merton College. He says: "It is easy to understand that men find it a weary task to read in sight of the beauty of the groves of Magdalen and the gardens of St. John. When Kubla Khan 'a stately pleasure dome decreed,' he did not mean to settle students there, and to ask them for metaphysical essays and for Greek and Latin prose compositions." Kubla Khan, Mr. Lang thinks, would have found a palace to his desire in the gardens of St. John or the groves of Magdalen, "but here," he adds, "is scarcely the training-ground of first-class men."

But it is quite time that we stroll out from Oxford to one, at least, of the many-storied

A Book of Hours

places in the vicinity. One of the most romantic pages of English history is filled with the story of Rosamond de Clifford, "that Rosamond whom men call fair." In some way or another, we learn the story of the far-away times of Henry II, while we are yet quite unlearned in the Hanoverian period, and not wholly familiar with the ups and downs of the Victorian age. Rosamond de Clifford was a reality of the twelfth century, but tradition has spun such a veil of romance about her that it is not always easy to believe that Rosamond actually lived, even in the far-away time. Her royal lover, Henry II, built her bower at Woodstock, which is but a few miles from Oxford. The entrance to the bower was so labyrinthine that to traverse it was impossible to the uninitiated save by means of a clue; a green silk thread is said to have been the means which took Queen Eleanor to the hiding place of the beauty. According to tradition, the queen was momentarily enthralled by Rosamond's wondrous charm, but she quickly recovered her self-possession, and gave her the choice of dagger or poison bowl which she bore in either hand, notwithstanding the difficulties that beset her ingress. Tennyson in

Oxford's Walks and Gardens

his "Becket" has lavished description on this bower of Rosamond.

HENRY. *I bade them clear
A royal pleasaunce for thee in the
wood,
Not leave these country-fold at
court.*

ROSAMOND. *I brought them
In from the wood and set them
here.
I love them
More than the garden flowers, that
seem at most
Sweet guests or foreign cousins, not
half speaking
The language of the land.*

* * *

HENRY. *Yet these tree towers,
Their long bird-echoing minster
aisles—the voice
Of the perpetual brook, these gold-
en slopes,
Of Solomon, spanning flowers—
that was your saying,
All pleased you so at first.*

One drinks from fair Rosamond's well, and
I have mentioned her to give interest to the
first short walk; we may take Godstow Nun-

A Book of Hours

nery, or its ruins; it is perhaps two miles from Oxford; for the most part the walk is along the Thames, by a shaded path; on one side is the river with boats and canoes, beyond the river are broad meadows, where hundreds of horses and cattle graze. Though one be alone, she is never alone, the gay parties along the stream affording constant company. The boatmen are not all in motion, some lie in boats—

*Moored to the banks mid wide grass meadows
which the sunshine fills,
And watch the warm, green, muffled Cumnor
Hills.*

After “no more than two miles’ walk” we come to the ruins of Godstow Nunnery. ’Twas at the nunnery that Rosamond was educated, here she fled for protection when she was *not* poisoned by Queen Eleanor. She died naturally, but it is supposed that a chalice, or some such figure on her tomb, gave rise to the tale of poison. Several times during her residence at Woodstock she visited Godstow, and, it is said, she was lectured by the nuns.

A fifteenth-century balladist describes thus the twelfth-century beauty:

Oxford's Walks and Gardens

*Her crisped locks like threads of gold
Appeared to all men's sight,
Her sparkling eyes, like Orient pearls,
Did cast a heavenly light.*

To return to Oxford, one of the glories of many-gloried Oxford is Magdalen College, with its majestic tower, from the top of which the May morn is greeted with the Latin hymn, its cloisters, chapel, water walks. As I walked, time and again where the Cherwell goes "meandering with a lazy motion," I grew accustomed to a presence which I could not dissociate from Magdalen, although he had more to do with Christ Church College. Cardinal Wolsey, in his robes of office and dignity, came often before my eyes. To Wolsey has been attributed the building of the tower here at Magdalen, but if he had any connection with it, it was the prosaic, although necessary one, of paying the bills when he was bursar to the college.

The great cardinal and chancellor was interested in the new learning which was agitating all Europe, and without doubt, desirous of making a monument to his greatness, founded the college, now Christ Church College, calling it Cardinal College. Contemporaneously with his

A Book of Hours

founding the college, he established a school at Ipswich for feeding the college; that died with his power. Cardinal Wolsey had a faithful follower, George Cavendish, by name, who attended him to his death, and afterward led a life of retirement, meditating on the vanity of human ambition as exemplified in Wolsey's life. After a time he wrote a life of Wolsey, but then people were not ready for a life of the cardinal; "men were busy undoing his work."—"Not till the days of Mary did Cavendish gather together his notes. Wolsey had become to him a type of the vanity of human endeavor, and points the morals of the superiority of a quiet life with God over the manifold activities of aspiring ambition." The work remained in manuscript until the next century. There were several copies in manuscript; one is now in the British Museum which you may see; "one copy must have fallen into the hands of Shakespeare, who condensed, with his usual quickness of perception, what the public could understand of it in the play of Henry VIII. It says much for Wolsey, that he chose as his personal attendant a man of the sweet, sensitive, retiring type of George Cavendish, though it was not till after

Oxford's Walks and Gardens

his fall from power that he learned the value of such a friend."

As I paced the water walks at Magdalen, I often thought of Cardinal Wolsey's career, often the play of Henry VIII was in my hand, and it is not strange that the scene became the stage in my imagination for the play. Many times the words with which we are so familiar sounded in my ears. I used to see the scene wherein Cardinal Wolsey, deprived of his seal, the haughty lords leave him—

So fare you well, my little good lord cardinal.

And he:

So farewell to the little good you bear me.

Farewell! a long farewell to all my greatness!

* * *

O Cromwell, Cromwell,

Had I but served my God with half the zeal

I served my king, He would not in mine age

Have left me naked to mine enemies.

The repudiated Queen Katherine looked upon Wolsey as the cause of her sorrow, and after the cardinal's death, we have, from Cavendish's note, with Katherine and her gentlemen usher, Griffith, the remarkable portrait which

A Book of Hours

gives the summing up of Wolsey's character that I wish to present to you, the blending of good and bad, the mingling of faults and virtues which posterity accepts, although his contemporaries did not take this charitable view; and, further, it is a tribute to his work at Christ Church. The queen enters assisted by gentleman usher and waiting woman.

KATHERINE. *Didst thou not tell me, Griffith,
as thou ledst me,
That the great child of honor,
Cardinal Wolsey, was dead?*

* * *

*Prithee, good Griffith, tell me how
he died:
If well, he stepped before me,
happily,
For my example.*

GENTLEMAN USHER. *Well, the voice goes,
madame:*

Then follows the account condensed from Cavendish:

*He was never,
But where he meant to ruin, pitiful:
His promises were as he then was, mighty;
But his performance, as he now is, nothing.*

Oxford's Walks and Gardens

On the diametrically opposite side of Oxford are Worcester College Gardens. These gardens have a lake, and as one sits on the shore of this lake, like Sir Bedevere, "revolving many memories," Amy Robsart, the ill-starred heroine of "Kenilworth," may be the subject of her reveries.

Before the foundation of Worcester College, an earlier college, Gloucester Hall, stood on the site. When Amy Robsart was murdered at Cumnor Hall, but four miles away, her body was brought to Gloucester Hall, and lay in state. I think I am right in telling you that Robert Dudley, her husband, was Chancellor of Gloucester Hall at this time. Her body lay in state in the hall, the hall was hung in mourning. The gentlewomen did watch, the mourners did dine. She was buried in the Church of St. Mary the Virgin. It is said that the agitated clergymen more than once in the course of the sermon said *murdered* instead of *slain*.

Cumnor Hall, where Amy lived, stood in the field adjoining the church. Its psychic sense is poignant, being one of the most romantically mysterious of castles because of the long-suffering vigil kept by a solitary lady. An eighteenth century ballad says:

A Book of Hours

*The village maids with fearful glance,
Avoid the ancient moss-grown wall;
Nor ever lead the merry dance
Among the groves of Cumnor Hall.*

*Full many a traveler oft hath sighed
And pensive wept the countess' fall,
As wandering onward they've espied
The haunted spires of Cumnor Hall.*

Now the pensive traveler would like to weep the countess's fall at sight of the towers, but there are no towers; every vestige of them is gone, but the memory of Amy remains. Not very long ago, an old man lived in Cumnor who remembered that when he and his boy friends fished in the ponds near by, a general scampering could be brought about by some one's calling out, " Dame Dudley is coming, Dame Dudley is coming! "

Now that I have brought you four miles from Oxford to Cumnor Hall, I will take you through the fields, and we will cross the strippling Thames at Bablock-hythe. How willingly would I travel weary miles simply to cross the Thames at Bablock-hythe! Call the ferryman and he will take us over, and then it is only a couple of miles or so farther to Stanton Har-

Oxford's Walks and Gardens

court, where, in the chamber of the tower, Pope translated the "Iliad." Perhaps we will climb the stair—the stair that makes us think of our Virgil only to invert the quotation. The Mantuan poet tells us the descent to Avernus is easy, but to retrace our steps and gain the upper air, there is the toil, the difficulty, but as one climbs the steep narrow stairs, with nothing but the blank slippery wall for hand support, she thinks the *ascent* is difficult, but to retrace one's steps in descent will be more difficult still—and then there is a heretical minute when physical discomfort is in excess of pilgrim zeal, when one wonders whether this sort of thing pays. But if one has had Pope, Gay, Lady Mary Wortley Montague, and others of that set for her familiar friends, she quickly forgets the discomfort, in her pleasure at seeing the places associated with them.

One of the most famous letters in literary history is connected with this place. I believe the fact is that Gay wrote the letter to Fortescue, but Pope admired it sufficiently to copy it, elaborate it, and send it off to Lady Mary. After their quarrel, he disclaimed the letter. It tells the story of those lovers killed by lightning who

A Book of Hours

are buried in the churchyard here at Stanton Harcourt, and we go to look at the tablet on the side of the church with the poetical tribute by Pope. It was of this that Lady Mary cynically wrote:

*Now they are happy in their doom,
For Pope has writ upon the tomb.*

We will go home by Eynsham, and will have made a fifteen-mile round. Perhaps I should not dare tell you how far the round is before we started out.

Before I leave Worcester College Gardens altogether, I wish to say that if by day one's memories there revert to Amy Robsart and her melancholy fortunes, at evening the memories awakened may be vastly different. Here during commemoration week are always enacted some pastoral plays. The gardens are lighted with fairy lamps and lanterns, the stage is set under a huge, widely spreading beech tree, near which a flowering elder bush displays its wealth of white. Sometimes, it's the Merry Wives and Falstaff that come under the Greenwood Tree here, or Julia may seek her recreant lord. Nature has a tricksy sense of the humorous. Never

Oxford's Walks and Gardens

did she display it more aptly than one evening last summer. The "Two Gentlemen of Verona" had taken possession of the magically lighted garden, and Proteus had just begun his soliloquy:

*O, how this spring of love resembleth
The uncertain glory of an April day,
Which now shows all the beauty of the sun,
And by and by a cloud takes all away!*

When plash came down an English shower, and elevated umbrellas took all glory and romance away for a little while.

I should like you to peep into Wadham Gardens with me. My friends sometimes protest here, and say, "We don't care anything about that seventeenth-century mystery, John Ingle-sant, that you say belongs in these gardens," but let me tell you one word of him. When Charles I was driven from London by that obstreperous Parliament, he took up his quarters, as every one knows, in the loyal city of Oxford. Here he held court, here the loyalist Parliament met. Gay dames and gallants made very merry in the beautiful city, and seemed quite oblivious of the fate impending for the king and kingdom.

A Book of Hours

A very good picture of Oxford at this time is in the early chapters of "John Inglesant." It would be difficult to define the hero, a compound of mystic, courtier, Jesuit, but his quarters were at Wadham, and after the exacting duties of his office in the court, I think of him returning to the cedar walk here at Wadham, where even in his day, three centuries ago, the trees were ancient, and here in the quiet retirement forgetting the turmoils of the court.

Perhaps you know the beautiful old quadrangle at Balliol, and the garden with its stately trees. I never, I think, enter the precincts of Balliol without recalling the friendship of two Balliol men which is immortalized in the verse of one of them. Matthew Arnold and Arthur Hugh Clough, a poet too, were Oxford men, lovers of the country about Oxford. After Clough's death in Florence, Matthew Arnold commemorated their friendship in the most beautiful verse, and enshrined in the poems the delightful scenes about Oxford. Had I gone to Oxford without Matthew Arnold's "Scholar Gypsy" and "Thyrsis" for company, my pleasure had been less, I know. Lines from those poems were in my heart and on my tongue:

Oxford's Walks and Gardens

*Come, let me read the oft-read tale again;
The story of the Oxford scholar poor,
Of pregnant parts and quick inventive brain,
Who, tired of knocking at preferment's door,
One summer morn forsook his friends,
And went to learn the gypsy-lore,
And roamed the world with that wild brother-
hood,
And came as most men deem'd to little good,
But came to Oxford and his friends no more.*

*But once, years after, in the country lanes,
Two scholars, whom at college erst he knew,
Met him, and of his way of life inquired,
Whereat he answer'd that the gypsy-crew,
His mates, had arts to rule as they desired
The workings of men's brains,
And they can bind them to what thoughts they
will.*

*"And I," he said, "the secret of their art
When fully learned will to the world impart,
But it needs heaven-sent moments for this
skill."*

*This said, he left them, and returned no more—
But rumors hung about the countryside,
That the lost scholar long was seen to stray
Seen by rare glimpses, pensive and tongue-
tied,
In hat of antique shape and cloak of gray,
The same the gypsies wore.*

A Book of Hours

*For most, I know, thou lov'st retired ground!
Thee at the ferry Oxford riders blithe,
Returning home on summer-nights have met
Crossing the stripling Thames at Bab-lock-
hithe,
Trailing in the cool stream thy fingers wet,
As the point's rope chops round;
And leaning backward in a pensive dream,
And fostering in thy lap a heap of flowers,
Pluck'd in shy fields and distant Wychwood
bowers,
And thine eyes resting on the moonlit stream.*

And this from Thyrsis:

*That single elm tree bright against the west—
I miss it! it is gone?
We prized it dearly; while it stood, we said,
Our friend, the Gypsy Scholar, was not dead;
While the tree lived, he in these fields lived on.*

*But hush! the upland hath a sudden loss
Of quiet!—Look, adown the dusk hillside,
A troop of Oxford hunters going home,
As in old days, jovial and talking, ride!
From hunting with the Berkshire hounds they
come.*

I cannot take time for a leisurely walk over Shotover Hill, beloved of Shelley, but I should entreat you to take the walk, a broad grassy

Oxford's Walks and Gardens

plateau, edged with trees and hedges. When the world is white with May, there is a beautiful frame for the plateau.

The first time I was on Shotover Plain, I was on my way to Forest Hill. I went miles out of my way, so perhaps you would not care to accompany me. I began to despair. I thought I should have to return, failing in my quest, but at last as I was giving way to my feeling that the pale mark of failure must be set on me, I caught sight of a village straggling up a tree-lined street. My heart told me that it was the place—but why my desire to see Forest Hill at all? Commentators are not agreed as to the place that gave Milton his picture for “*L’Allegro*” and “*Il Penseroso*”; the most are for Horton, some for Forest Hill, but no one can deny that he met, wooed, and married Mary Powell here. I expect that those poems of Milton, “*Il Penseroso*” and “*L’Allegro*,” gave me some of my first and greatest anticipatory pleasures in English rural life and songs. Consequently I was most ready to believe Forest Hill suggested the poems, if I found it satisfactory to me, and it was ideal. Scarcely had I discovered the sweet village before I also saw,

A Book of Hours

*Hard by, a cottage chimney smokes
From betwixt two aged oaks,
Where Corydon and Thyrsis met.*

Sometimes my remarks about the Cherwell, its beauty and the pleasure it gives the Oxfordians, seem to have been taken rather in the nature of a glove thrown down—which is far from my intention—but in my passage from one New England town to another, I have had queries like this discharged at me: “Do you know the Sudbury well?” “Very little.” “The first day this spring that’s suitable for boating, you are to spend all day with us on the Sudbury. I’m sure you’ll say it’s as beautiful as any English river you ever saw.” And here has my listener forgotten the most forceful statement that I bring to my work—it is not the intrinsic beauty alone, it is the association which adds a glamour indescribable to Oxford’s charms.

My prints will suggest little to you of the outward beauty, my tongue is feeble to express to you the poetry of association, so until you have seen “the sweet city with her dreaming spires” you can not picture to yourself its delights.

FROM LOUGH NEAGH TO LOUGH FOYLE

IT might be assumed that anyone knows where Lough Neagh is, but false postulate. It is in the heart of Ulster—bordering on five counties, Tyrone, Dury, Antrim, Down, Armagh, and is the largest lake in the United Kingdom. The Irish are not perfectly acquainted with it. “Is the water salt?” “Nay, man alive, dinna ye ken, that an interior lake of this size were it salt would be the world’s wonder?” Its surface is little diversified, having only one island of any size, Ram Island, and its shores are not picturesque.

But whether one may locate the lake, everyone knows its origin, from a spring with miraculous power of overflowing if the stone cover were not properly replaced. A woman that had heard her crying child and ran to it, lifted the cover of the spring to look beneath and forgot to put it back, hence the inundated country, submerged towns, and towers for twenty miles,

A Book of Hours

and where the places were, Lough Neagh is! This is the commonest version, known by everyone and credited by many.

Moore's lines have fixed the legend ineradicably.

*On Lough Neagh's banks as the fisherman strays
When the clear soft eve's declining,
He sees the round towers of other days
In the wave beneath him shining.*

This is the meager legend that accounts for Lough Neagh. Few enough of the northern peasants have heard an elaboration of the story which I am going to give you.

There is in Dublin, in the possession of the Royal Irish Academy, a book called the "Book of the Dun Cow." It is the oldest manuscript book of miscellaneous literature of Ireland. It was transcribed from older books by a learned scribe in 1106. It is mutilated, but one hundred and thirty-four large vellum pages now remain, of poetry, stories, biographies—all kinds of literature. It is called the book of the Dun Cow from the parchment on which it was transcribed. Some notion of the value of this book may be got from a little knowledge of the history of

From Lough Neagh to Lough Foyle

Ireland. When a conqueror dictated his terms of peace, and the concessions that the vanquished were to make, an item of importance besides lands and stores was—the “Book of the Dun Cow.” When arms were resumed, one of the objects to gain was this same book of the Dun Cow. The book is not beautiful to look at, as are the “Book of Kells,” the “Book of Darrow,” the “Book of Armagh,” and others of the transcendently beautiful illuminated manuscripts over which the monks toiled, but knowing the history of the Dun Cow, it has a romantic interest for me, a quality of interest that the more artistic do not possess.

When I returned to my home in North Ireland, my host, after giving me the never-wanting “Welcome home,” added, “Did you see the book of the Dun Cow?”—a book in which he shared my interest.

Among the stories in this famous book is one that tells of Lough Neagh and its origin. It should be told in something other than this day’s vernacular.

Long, long years ago, centuries ago, a certain king of Munster had a son, Ecca by name, who became alienated from his father. The estrange-

A Book of Hours

ment grew, so that the son, with a following, left the country to found a new kingdom. His men had with them horses and many possessions. One night, when they had encamped in a strange country, the ruler of the country ordered their immediate withdrawal, and upon their failing to go, he killed all their horses, and said, "To-night we have slain the beasts, to-morrow, if ye tarry, 'twill be the men." "But how can we go on," asked Ecca, "when we have no horses to carry our burdens?" "I will provide means," said the chief, and there appeared one gigantic horse able to carry all their belongings. He warned Ecca that the horse must be kept continually in motion, that if it were permitted to stop for a moment a very dire disaster would befall the expedition. The company went on until it came to the Plain of the Gray Copse, which they selected for their new home. In the distribution of goods, the immense horse stood still. They were forgetful of the warning, and a spring started from the ground. Ecca, remembering then that he had been cautioned about results, knew that the spring must be watched lest it should bring disaster upon his new colony. He built a house around the

From Lough Neagh to Lough Foyle

spring, gave it into the care of a woman, and commanded her to let no one draw water except they came from the palace. For a long time the woman was most vigilant, and no harm came to the Plain of the Gray Copse; all was prosperous.

Now Ecce had two daughters, Arin and Liban. The husband of Arin had the "fatal gift of prophecy," but, like other prophets, his words availed naught. He implored Ecce to quit the Plain of the Gray Copse, predicting the destruction of all if they remained.

*Come forth, come forth, ye valiant men: build
boats and build them fast!*

*I see the waters surging out, a torrent deep and
vast;*

*I see our chief and all his host o'erwhelmed be-
neath the wave,*

*And Arin, too, my best beloved, alas, I cannot
save.*

*But Liban east and west shall swim,
Long ages on the ocean's brim*

*By mystic shores and islets dim
And down in the deep sea.*

So Curnan, the son-in-law of Ecce, is represented as saying, going up and down the land in

A Book of Hours

great distress of mind. And finally his words proved true. The spring was left unguarded for a moment and the waters came rushing out; all things and people were engulfed and destroyed, save only Liban, Curnan, and one other. It is only with Liban's fate that we are concerned, and here ends the story as far as Lough Neagh, but the rest of the story attaches to the country immediately about the Lough.

Liban remained under the water in her chamber for a year, and her lapdog remained with her. One day when she saw the salmon splashing beneath the water, she wished she were a salmon, and straightway she became one, except as to her breast and head, which retained Liban's form, and her lapdog was changed to an otter. She swam east, and she swam west, as Curnan had predicted. One day, Beoc, from the ecclesiastical house, was starting off in his curragh on a mission to Pope Gregory, in Rome. As he sailed over the water, he heard beautiful, entrancing singing; it was Liban, and she said to Beoc, "Come to Ollarba near the end of the year, with boats and fishing nets to take me from the water." Ollarba was what is now Larne Water, on the Antrim coast. Beoc most

From Lough Neagh to Lough Foyle

composedly sailed on, executed his commission in Rome, but on his return to Ireland he told the other saints in the monastery, and a goodly company came on a day near the end of the year, as appointed by Liban. She was caught in the net of one Fergus of Meelich, and although there was some contention between him and Beoc as to the possession of her, it was soon amicably settled: she was conveyed in a chariot drawn by yoked oxen to sanctuary, and immediately translated to joys of Paradise.

Arboe is on the shores of Lough Neagh, in county Tyrone, in the region famous for its Rapparees, a few centuries ago. 'Twas not far away that Rory, the Rapparee, most famous of all, terrorized the English invader.

*Full oft have the hills of Tyrone
With cry of the gallow-glass rang,
When down on the red ranks of Cromwell
With hatred and fury they sprang.
But never in breach or in battle,
In onset, in foray or raid,
Oh, ne'er saw the hills of Tyrone
Such charge as the Rapparees made.*

The abbey ruins and cross of Arboe are outside the village, and because of that, perhaps,

A Book of Hours

and perhaps because of the charge the Rapparees made, the cross was not injured by Cromwell. The broken arm is not the work of time, or of Cromwellian soldiers, but of nineteenth-century vandalism.

Then we may look over to Ram's Island in Lough Neagh.

*It's pretty to be in Balinderry,
It's pretty to be in Aghaler,
It's pretty to be in bonny Ram's Island
Sitting under an ivy tree—
Och hone, Och hone.
Oh, that I was in Little Ram's Island,
Oh, that I was with Phelim my diamond,
He would whistle and I would sing
Till we would make the whole island ring.
"I'm going," he said, "from Balinderry,
Out and across the stormy sea,
And if in your heart you love me, Mary,
Open your arms at last to me."
And there in the gloom of the groaning
mast,
He kissed me first and he kissed me last.
'Twas happy to be in Little Ram's Island,
But now it's as sad as sad can be,
For the ship that sailed with Phelimy Hy-
land,
Is sank forever beneath the sea.*

140

From Lough Neagh to Lough Foyle

It's pretty to be in Balinderry,

It's pretty to be in Magharalin.

'Tis pretty to be in Balinderry

'Tis pretty to be at the Cash of Toome.

But a variation in locale and sentiment is the Church Island version. Church Island is a beautiful little island in Lough Beg, an arm of Lough Neagh. It was the site of an early religious foundation, and the ruins are in a state of unusual preservation.

Oh, it's pretty to be in bonny Church Island,

Nobody there but Phelim my diamond,

Phelim would whistle and I would sing

*Until we would make the Church Island
ring.*

Phelimé, Phelimé, why did you leave me?

*Sure I could wash, I could bake, I could
spin,*

Phelimé, Phelimé, why did you leave me?

I'll tell the priest on you, Phelimé, Phil.

Randalstown was in the region where I was led to expect that I might find the song, and dodging into shops, buying a few biscuits, I inquired, but no one knew it in Randalstown. I found it, however, in Cushendall, where I found much else, things lovely and of good report.

A Book of Hours

The ruins of Shane's Castle are on the shores of Lough Neagh, and very picturesque they are. Shane's Castle was one of my objects in Ireland. This domain was for long the seat of that family of O'Neills that ruled Ireland before the coming of St. Patrick. Now the name and insignia of the O'Neills are preserved, but the present family are usurpers, Chichesters of Elizabethan favor, and they have no lineal claim to the glories of the historic O'Neills. The flag of the O'Neills was flying from the bastion on the glorious June day when I visited Shane's Castle. The emblem of the O'Neill's is the Red Hand. Many hundred years ago, when a viking invader was nearing Ireland, he promised vast possessions to the first man who touched land. An O'Neill, the progenitor of the great race, cut off his left hand and flung it ashore, thus touching land before any of his fellow adventurers. This story is not the sole property of the O'Neills. Other families claim it under somewhat modified circumstances, but the fact is that the O'Neills have always used the Red Hand for their emblem.

The O'Neills have a banshee, and she was

From Lough Neagh to Lough Foyle

distinctly seen by many in 1816, when the Castle was burned, for it is not time, but fire, that has made these ruins. The flames lighted up Lough Neagh for miles and miles around, the people gathered on the heights around to see the sight, there were no means for extinguishing it, and many saw a figure, white-robed, move from window to window wringing her hands, the banshee of the house.

The demesne is the finest in Ireland, excepting the Marquis of Waterford's at Curraghmore, but because it is in the North, it is less well known. It was very early that I rang the bell at the lodge gate—so early that the portress was inclined to deny me entrance. She thought sinister business and not pleasure must be my motive, but I convinced her that I was a harmless tourist and had no business beyond the seeing the estate and Shane's Castle. She became hospitable, and upon my telling her that my early arrival meant that I had left breakfastless, she gave me bread and tea and egg, and we chatted. The breakfast cost me whatever I pleased to give in money, although the portress demurred about accepting anything; but the heaviest payment exacted was the looking at the fam-

A Book of Hours

ily photographs and commenting upon the resemblances and qualities.

The O'Neill was justified to lose his hand if 'twere to gain territory as beautiful as is the estate. From the gate I entered to the Castle is three long miles, as I was told again and again. And anyone that thinks a mile is absolute is uncertain; there are miles and miles. There's the Irish mile, which is much longer, longer by more than twelve hundred feet, than the English mile. But one did not care for number or length of miles when the scene was so delightful, the morning so rare. The Main winds in and about the place; several bridges cross it. Trees of infinite variety and varied growth shade the way, the most beautiful ferns and rhododendrons border it. Sometimes the road skirts Lough Neagh; always it is beautiful. The rockery, a natural formation of rock like Giant's Causeway, has been made very attractive with a most luxurious growth of ferns. One may spend what time she will on the way to the Castle, there are seats beneath the trees, or in the hawthorn hedges. Then the ivy-grown towers and fragments of the Castle come in view.

More than a hundred years ago Mrs. Sid-

From Lough Neagh to Lough Foyle

dons, the great actress, was entertained here, and in her diary has left some description of the passage of time. The luxury of the establishment "almost inspired the recollection of the Arabian Nights' entertainment. Six or eight carriages with a numerous throng of lords and ladies on horseback began the day by making excursions around the celestial Paradise, returning home just in time for dinner. The table was served with an elegance and profusion to which I have seldom seen anything comparable. Immense silver flagons held claret. A fine orchestra played during the entire repast, the musicians being stationed in corridors which led into a conservatory, where the guests plucked dessert from trees of most exquisite fruits. The foot of the conservatory was washed by the waves of a superb lake, from which the cool and pleasant winds came to murmur in concert with the harmony from the corridors." At this time of which Mrs. Siddons writes, "the beauty, talent, and rank of Ireland used to assemble here," and as she lacks "words to describe the beauty and splendor of this enchanting place," I may be excused if I utterly fail to give you any notion of its claims.

A Book of Hours

The place to visit Shane's Castle is Randals-town, and a few miles beyond Randalstown is Antrim, where one finds one of the most perfect Round Towers in Ireland. It is ninety-three feet high, fifty feet in circumference, and high up in it are four slits, North, South, East, West. It is so easy to ask for what were these Round Towers built? Were it easy to answer, perhaps they would not have the interest for me that they have, but the mystery of the origin, and their defiance of time, together with the beautiful surroundings of many of them, give a magnified interest. It is not exaggeration to say volumes have been written upon these Round Towers; many ponderous tomes have been devoted to the subject, one proving what the other disproves. There are antiquarians confident that they were pre-Christian in origin, others that they were built by the early Christians, while still others defend the theory of their pagan origin, but believe they were subsequently adapted to Christian uses.

Briefly, to sum up some of the uses that have been ascribed to these Round Towers. Among their pagan uses: 1. Fire temples. 2. Places to proclaim Druidical festivals. 3. Gnomons,

From Lough Neagh to Lough Foyle

or astronomical observatories. 4. That they were Buddhist temples. 5. Sepulture.

Among their Christian uses: 1. Anchorite towers. 2. Penitential prisons. 3. Belfries. 4. Keeps, or monastic watch towers, treasure houses, beacons.

Petrie's conclusions are that, first, they were intended to serve as belfries; second, as keeps, or places of strength in which sacred utensils, books, relics, and other valuables were deposited, and into which the ecclesiastics to whom they belonged could retire for security in cases of sudden predatory attack.

If I must declare for anyone as architect of these curious Round Towers, it would be for Gobhan Saer. I have no reason except my own pleasure in associating this half-mythical architect of the sixth century with these mysterious structures. I would rather Gobhan Saer had the honor than St. Fechin.

One of Ireland's poets, D. F. McCarthy, sings:

*The pillar towers of Ireland, how wondrously
they stand,
By the lakes and rushing rivers, through the
valleys of our land,*

A Book of Hours

*In mystic file, through the isle, they lift their
heads sublime,
These gray old pillar temples—these conquerors
of Time.*

*Two favorites hath Time—the pyramids of Nile,
And the old mystic temples of our own dear isle.*

And this is what he tells us of “The Gobhan
Saer”:

*He stept a man out of the ways of men,
And no one knew his sept or rank or name,—
Like a strong stream far issuing from a glen,
From some source unexplored, the Master
came;*

*Gossips there were, who, wondrous keen of ken,
Surmised that he should be a child of shame;
Others declared him of the Druids; then
Through Patrick's labors fallen from power
and fame.*

*He lived apart, wrapt up in many plans;
He wooed not women, tasted not of wine;
He shunned the sports and councils of the clans,
Nor ever knelt at a frequented shrine.
His orisons were old poetic ranns,
Which the new Ollaves deemed an evil sign;
To most he seemed one of those pagan Khans,
Whose mystic vigor knows no cold decline.*

From Lough Neagh to Lough Foyle

*He was the builder of the wondrous Towers,
Which, tall and straight and exquisitely round,
Rise monumental round the isle once ours;
Index-like, marking spots of holy ground,
In gloaming glens, in leafy lowland bowers,
On rivers' banks, these Cloiteachs old abound;
Where Art, enraptured, meditates long hours,
And Science flutters like a bird spellbound.*

*Lo! wheresoe'er these pillar-towers aspire,
Heroes and holy men repose below,—
The bones of some gleaned from the pagan pyre,
Others on armor lie, as for a foe:
It was the mighty Master's life desire
To chronicle his great ancestors so;
What holier duty, what achievement higher,
Remains to us, than this he thus doth show?*

*Yet he, the builder, died an unknown death:
His labor done, no man beheld him more;
'Twas thought his body faded like a breath,
Or, like a sea mist, floated off Life's shore.
His works alone attest his life and lore,—
They are the only witnesses he hath,
All else Egyptian darkness covers o'er.*

*Men called him Gobhan Saer, and many a tale
Yet lingers in the byways of the land,
Of how he cleft the rock, and down the vale
Led the bright river, childlike, in his hand;*

A Book of Hours

*Of how on giant ships he spread great sail,
And many marvels else by him first planned:
But though these legends fade, in Innisfail
His name and towers for centuries shall stand.*

In the sixth century he lived. If I must associate them with some definite builder I like it to be this man that "stept a man out of the ways of men, and no one knew his sept or rank or name." And I like to think that centuries before Giotto's campanile was begun this man had reared many campanilia, "tall and straight and exquisitely round."

There is the Round Tower Antrim on private estate Streples, Round Tower of Monasterboice, Round Tower of Glendalough. This Tower of Glendalough, its divine beauty and tradition make a creation indescribable—but *Glendalough is not in Ulster.*

Near this Round Tower in Antrim is a flat Druidical stone which some would have us believe was actually used for human sacrifices, but I like better to believe that 'twas a witch's stone, as it's now described, and a very energetic witch she was, too, for she jumped from the top of the Round Tower and struck knee and elbow, making the indentations—which

From Lough Neagh to Lough Foyle

were partly full of innocent rain water when I saw it.

There are many interesting places between Antrim and the coast, but so many more on the coast that one cannot linger. Carrickfergus is interesting because it is identified with Turu's Castle and Ossian, the warrior-poet.

Glenoe, a glen village before one reaches Larne, is a delightful little village, but few enough tourists will go out of the way to it. They will hurry on to Larne for the coast tour, and hurry out of Larne for the coast tour, although Larne has in itself much that's interesting, and to many that dislike the sea Larne has interest because of the short sea passage over to Scotland, less than two hours at this point.

At Larne, or near Larne, was Rathmore at Moylinney, the home of Mongan, a person it is difficult to disentangle from the network of history and fairy lore.

He was King of Ulster in the seventh century. The annals of Clennacnoise under date of A.D. 624 tell us gravely that Mongan, a very well-spoken man, and much given to the wooing of women, was killed by one Arthur, a Welshman, with a stone.

A Book of Hour

Mongan was in Rathmore of Moylinney in his kingship. Every night his poet would recite him a story. So great was his lore that this went on from Hallowe'en to May day. One day the king asked him respecting the death of a certain Fenian hero, and the poet said he was slain at Duffy in Leinster. Mongan said it was false. The poet said he would satirize him with lampoons, his father, and his mother, and his grandmother, and he would sing spells upon their waters so that no fish could be caught in their river mouths. He would sing spells upon their woods so that they would not give fruit, upon their plains so that they would be barren of produce forever.

Mongan promised him precious things, doubling them, tripling them, then one third, one half, or his whole land, then his wife unless he were redeemed before three days. Thereat the woman was sorrowful. Mongan told her not to be sorrowful. The tear was not taken from her cheek. Help would certainly come to them.

When it came to the third day, and the poet would have his bond, Mongan said, "Be not sorrowful, woman, I hear even now his feet who is coming to our help. I hear his feet in

From Lough Neagh to Lough Foyle

Kerry, then over the great lake of Killarney, then on loughs, rivers, bays—now in the Larne water—” The person came, disproved the saying of the poet, and all was well.

Given fair skies, the coach and car drive from Larne to the Causeway is a delight unspeakable; the road is fine, a great engineering feat; on one side for the most of the way is the Moyle, the name given to the Northern Channel between Ireland and Scotland. Its blueness in the summer is the essence of cerulean. I never saw such *blue seas*. On the left there is varying scenery of cliff, awful in height, and sea-washed caves, castles, villages, inns; a very modern castle is that built this century by the Marchioness of Londonderry, filled with curiosities of her collecting and recently opened for a hotel. It's one of the things on the Antrim Coast Road for which I don't particularly care.

The structure here, white limestone and basalt resting on thin Jurassic clays, causes continual landslips, and there is one village called Sliding Village, as it is continually sliding to low elevation, where the peasants patiently re-establish themselves.

A Book of Hours

Red Bay is interesting for its arch and caves, in one of which Old Nanine dispensed poteen for over thirty years, and the cave bears the name of Nanine's Cave. Another cave adjacent to Nanine's is yet known as Forge Cave; here for years a blacksmith wrought at his trade. The blacksmith has gone now, and none of the caves are inhabited, but a traveler of years ago says: "The blacksmith was in perfect keeping with the scene. One might have fancied that his life had been spent in shoeing horses for brigands and rapparees. His continual fires kept the cave tolerably dry, in which respect 'twas better than Nannie's, where there was a constant deposit of moisture, but a drop of the *rale stuff* made it all safe enough."

But my favorite village on the Antrim coast is Cushendall. For long I had had the strongest wish to visit Cushendall; words of its beauty had come to me now and again; I knew 'twas a good hunting ground for my particular game of legends and stories. Had Cushendall disappointed me, 'twould have been a colossal disappointment, but the little village at the foot of the Dall, embowered in roses and fuchsias and ferns, fulfilled every promise. Even the inn with

From Lough Neagh to Lough Foyle

its good situation and hospitable attention had not been unduly praised.

If ever you should visit Cushendall, go to my hostelry, the Glens of Antrim, and have a room that looks down upon the rose garden. Take jaunting-car rides, and be content to stay there—a year. We have one instance of a novelist that gratefully dedicates his books, or a book, to his tailor, another that makes his dedicatory tribute to his doctors, but when I dedicate my book it shall be to the Irish landladies, four in number, that smoothed the way of a solitary in a strange country. The quartet will be made up—I'll tell you so that you'll recognize the dedication—of my Dublin hostess, a pretty Quakeress who would have prevented my seeing Coquelin if she could, but in every other way she furthered my pleasure in Dublin; of Mrs. Millar, the proprietress of Glens of Antrim, herself a Dublin woman, gracious and so kind to the unattended traveler; of Mrs. Hunter of Ballycastle—the Antrim Arms—I'll tell you later some of her special kindnesses; and last, but far from least, dear little Mrs. McMahon on the East Wall of Londonderry. If I had a mine of sovereigns, I would fill all Mrs. Mc-

A Book of Hours

Mahon's rooms, and the dwellers in them would eat her grilled salmon, her grilled chop, drink her brewing of tea, and bless her and me. If you ever find yourself at Port Rush, the most fashionable watering place in North Ireland, do take the couple of hours by train to Londonderry, cross the ferry, and at Shipquay Street ask to be directed to the East Wall, McMahon's Private Hotel. It's near Ferryquay gate, the very gate the Prentice Boys shut so uncereemoniously in the face of James II. Mrs. McMahon will wish a sponsor, "use my name;" you don't know how many times that's quoted from kind Irish gentlemen and ladies that were my sponsors, up and down and round the country.

But to return to Cushendall. In the matter of scenery, you'll be difficult to please if you ask for greater variety than Cushendall offers; there is Red Bay, for sea, Cushendall River, wood, mountains, and glens. Seven glens are in this vicinity, although they are not all easily accessible from this point; this is the glen country, before we enter the country known historically as the Route. But Glen Airff is one of the seven easily reached: a car to the fort, a walk

From Lough Neagh to Lough Foyle

through the glen with its numberless waterfalls of all shapes and heights, its hazel and larches and ferns, and when one reaches the tea house at the mouth of the glen, one's jaunting car will have come round by the road, too.

The Old Church at Layde is very picturesque with its mantel of ivy and rose and fuchsia. The sea washes its lower edge, the speedwell makes a dense blue carpet under many of the horizontal stones, and here and there is a fine Celtic cross. The most noticeable thing is the large plane tree growing in a roofless church. Long years ago, when it was the custom to carry the coffin on poles, a man who had helped bear the coffin stuck his pole in the ground to save the trouble of carrying it home. It took root and grew to this size. Since, the church has been roofless; at least one marriage has been solemnized under the tree.

Go up to Glendun to see the old altar, in the cleft root of an oak tree it is builded, its inscription cannot be deciphered. Glendun holds tradition of Fin McCool of the third century, the seventh king of Ireland, who continued to be the great popular hero even to the seventh century, and about whom is grouped the Fe-

A Book of Hours

nian cycle of saga. "Warrior better than Fin," says an old vellum manuscript in the British Museum, "never struck his hand into chiefs, inasmuch as for service he was a soldier, a hospitaller for hospitality, in heroism a hero, and in strength a champion worthy of a king, so that ever since, and from that until this, it is with Fin that every such is coördinated."

Fin McCool lived on one of the mountains—"I don't know where Fin lived, but do know where his son is supposed to be buried." "Don't say supposed to be," I entreated. "Well, where he is buried, if ye like that better," said the obliging carman. But Ossian, the son of Fin McCool, is buried all over Ireland, and all over Scotland as well. Robert Burns in one of his peregrinations in Scotland falls into an ecstasy of enthusiasm, exclaiming, "I have seen Ossian's grave, think of *that!*"

Of course Cushendall would not be perfect without a rath, and upon that rath, "once upon a time," was Court McMartin, where dwelt the Lord of the seven glens, and let me tell you how he came to be Lord of the seven glens. He was but a poor fisherman when one day he saw just off the shore of Cushendall a beautiful ship, its

From Lough Neagh to Lough Foyle

poop of gold and sails of purple, while on the deck was a man reading in a wondrous book. McMartin did not know it, but the man was a magician. McMartin was standing on a rock, and the man called to him. The portion of the rock upon which McMartin stood detached itself from the main rock, and was turned into a silver boat which sailed over the waves to the astrologer. "McMartin," said he, "it's written that I must take a wife from this place; go you to the village and bring her to me."

Then McMartin hastened to his inn house and took his own wife, a very pretty young woman, but a vixen most pronounced. His conscience troubled him a little, but he soothed it by saying, "She'd be much better off than he, a poor fisherman, could ever make her," and off he went with her to the magician, but when he saw him coming he called out, "McMartin, I don't want her, we've shrews enough in our country without her," and off he sailed, but first threw into the boat a big bag of gold. When the little silver boat reached the rock, it became a part of the rock again, and McMartin feared for the gold, but it remained, and with it he

A Book of Hours

purchased the seven glens, and became Lord over them.

Cushendun is the sister village of Cushendall. It lacks the beautiful green trees, but has more of the open sea, and some very interesting caves which the sea has worn into conglomerate. The longest of these caves is fifty feet, and forms the only approach to a house known as Cave House. This solitary house is everywhere surrounded by perpendicular walls of rock, except at the front where it looks upon the sea. "Is this the only approach to the house?" we asked of some children near. "Yes, unless the wee pad over the precipice," and the cave entrance looked, and was preferable, to the "wee pad." A most delightfully situated place for suggestion of smugglers.

All along the coast walk one sees seaweed sea wrack, as it is called, hung to dry, or exposed in various ways for drying. The gathering the seaweed was one of the industries of the peasants. It was burned for iodine, and a beggarly pittance was obtained from it. That industry has lessened, still one sees the wrack, and a little song I know, "Sea Wrack," by Moira O'Neill, gives a bit of life around it.

From Lough Neagh to Lough Foyle

*The wrack was dark an' shiny where it floated
in the sea,*

*There was no one in the brown boat but only
him an' me;*

*Him to cut the sea wrack, me to mind the boat,
An' not a word between us the hours we were
afloat.*

*The wet wrack,
The sea wrack,
The wrack was strong to cut.*

*We laid it on the gray rocks to wither in the sun,
An' what should call my lad then, to sail from
Cushendun?*

*With a low moon, a full tide, a swell upon the
deep,*

Him to sail the old boat, me to fall asleep.

*The dry wrack,
The sea wrack,
The wrack was dead so soon.*

*There' a fire low upon the rocks to burn the
wrack to kelp,*

*There' a boat gone down upon the Moyle, an'
sorra one to help!*

*Him beneath the salt sea, me upon the shore,
By sunlight or moonlight we'll lift the wrack
no more.*

*The dark wrack,
The sea wrack,
The wrack may drift ashore.*

A Book of Hours

I shall not desire a more appreciative audience than the small one that frequently listened to these recitals of mine. The first time that I recited this little poem, 'twas to an audience of two, mother and daughter; another daughter entered just as I ended the lines, and looked inquiringly at the others to know why they were so moved, and the mother explained as though recounting the misadventure of some friends, "A pair went gathering sea wrack, and he went down."

"Och, God save us!" cried the newcomer.

"He was drowned, and she was left."

These little cabin audiences are not sated with entertainment, and appreciation of familiar life told in story or verse is keen.

When one begins the drive from Cushendall to Ballycastle, she goes for a few miles through the smiling country of the glens, but leaves that after awhile for mountain moorlands, and considerable of the way is through rather bare hill country. However, the hills are blushing with heather, here and there is the turf-cutting, provided you're in turf-cutting season. As I had visited the turf-cutting of my own villages, I was quite sophisticated and could smile supe-

From Lough Neagh to Lough Foyle

riorly when the Manchester man in the car asked the driver if they were draining the mountain.

Before one reaches Ballycastle town, there's the Margy River to cross, and near it is the Franciscan Friary founded by Sorley Boy in the sixteenth century; one sees Fair Head, too; but all these points are for special excursion later on. The legend is that the children of Lir, while doomed for centuries to dwell upon the seas, spent nine centuries upon the waters, until the sound of Christian bells should be heard in Ireland. This is an Ulster story, and one of the "Three Sorrows of Story." For three hundred years they floated on the Moyle.

Moore's verse of it is—

*Silent, O Moyle, be the roar of thy waters,
Break not, ye breezes, your chain of repose,
While murmuring mournfully, Lir's only daughter
Tells to the night-star her tale of woes.*

Fair Head—and the promontory is fair indeed—is seen for miles, as one walks, sails, or drives about the coast. Beautiful as it is in the matter of scenery, and remarkable as it is geologically, there attaches to Fair Head another

A Book of Hours

interest. On the north side is a sloping rock, and it is on this rock, according to tradition, that the three sons of Usnach landed with Deirdre, when they returned from Scotland. The greatest of Ireland's "Three Sorrows of Story" is the "Fate of the Sons of Usnach," a story that has been told by bards of Ireland and Scotland for many ages. This, too, is an Ulster story, and more classic than many of the Celtic legends.

The time of the story was in the reign of Conor, King of Ulster, in the time of the Red Branch Knights, the cycle of Fin McCool and his fellow giants. Conor MacNessa, King of Ulster, feasted at the house of his story-teller, Phelim. While they feasted, word came to Phelim that his wife had borne him a daughter. Caffa, the Druid, was of the company, and he rose up and said, "Let her be called Deirdra (Dread), for by reason of her beauty many sorrows shall fall on Ulster."

"Woe to thee, Deirdre! Deirdra, daughter of Phelim."

The nobles were for slaying the child, and swords flashed in the air, but Conor MacNessa said, "Give her to me for wife." And the Druid again warned:

From Lough Neagh to Lough Foyle

King Conor, there's woe for thy pity, this woman child born,

*This bud of sweet promise will wound herself
red with her thorn.*

*O king, in the future I prophesy evil before thee,
With the life of this child. Wilt thou listen,
and heed to my story?*

*The breath of a babe? or Connaught and Ulster
in sorrow?*

*A dozen swords spring from their scabbards and
flash fierce and bright,*

*The child for the fair steel, stretched out her
small hands in delight.*

*Conor laughed; Let her live, and if beauty
should grant her a dower,*

*I will wed. Toast your queen, ere I hide her
from fate in a tower.*

Conor put her in a lonely tower with her conversation dame, Lavarcum, to watch over her.

Deirdra was beautiful as a dream; her nurse fed her romantic young brain with many sweet tales, and the girl was lonely for love. One day

*She leaned from the casement and cried:
"Look, nurse, they have slain a young deer in
the courtyard below,
And the raven awaits them.*

My prince shall have skin like yon snow,

A Book of Hours

*As red as the blood be his lip, and his hair like
the raven's dark wing."*

"Hush, dearest!" the woman replied.

"Hush, dearest, and think on the king."

But Deirdra begs to know if there is a youth so pure-skinned, with raven dark hair, and with lips blood red.

*"Darling, in Conor's court I've heard of as fair
a young knight."*

Deirdra saw and was loved by Naisi, the son of Usnach. Naisi and his two brothers rescued Deirdra from her prison, and bore her over sea to Scotland, but there her beauty was her undoing, because Scotia's king saw and loved her, and Naisi and his brothers and followers made war upon him, and defeated him. They then fled to Loch Eathaigh, where they lived happily by the chase. But Conor, in Ulster, sought means to win the brothers back; he offered the quest to his most valiant men in the Red Branch, and Fergus went to bring them back under his warranty. Deirdra begged that they should not return, knowing that treachery awaited them, but they did not listen.

The story is full of poetic description of their

From Lough Neagh to Lough Foyle

life, how they hunted the stag, fished, slept with swaying ferns for pillows, and how the cuckoo called to them. Deirdra's farewell to Alba is very full of beauty. They returned to Ireland, landed under Fair Head at Rock Usnach—and from there they went on to Conor's palace in Armagh. All the time there are entreaties from Deirdra that they will heed her, but they heed not her dreams, nor warnings. "I have a sign for you, O sons of Usnach, if Conor designs to commit treachery on you, or no."

"What sign is that?" said Naisi.

"If Conor summon you into the hall where are the nobles of Ulster with him, he has no mind of treachery; but if you be sent to the mansion of the Red Branch there is treachery."

When they came to the gate, they struck a loud stroke with the wooden knocker. The doorkeeper asked, "Who is there?" "The three sons of Usnach with Deirdra." Conor said, "Be lodged in Mansion of Red Branch." Deirdra still pressed them to fly, but they would not. They had never been guilty of cowardice or unmanliness, so they would not fly. They were playing chess in the mansion of the Red Branch, when Conor sent a messenger to report

A Book of Hours

if Deirdra were as beautiful as formerly. Lavarcum, Deirdra's old nurse, volunteered to go. She kissed them all lovingly, but reproved them for playing on chessboard while Conor grieves after the loss of Deirdra. "Make fast doors and windows, for an evil deed is to be done this night," she warns.

"What news have you?" asked Conor, when Lavarcum returned. "Good and bad. Good that the sons of Usnach are returned to you. Bad—that Deirdra has lost her color and shape." But Conor sent another messenger to go spy upon the beauty of Deirdra. None were willing, but finally Trendom went. He dared not look through the door, so pried until he found an open window. Deirdra saw him, and told Naisi, who threw a chessman at him, putting out his eye. But Trendom had seen Deirdra, and reported her the fairest woman in the world.

Then Conor called his troops together and surrounded the house of the Red Branch, and set fire to it. "Who are there? Who are ye about us?" called the sons of Usnach, and they shouted back, "*Conor and Ulster!*"

"Will you break the warranty of Fergus?"

From Lough Neagh to Lough Foyle

“The sons of Usnach shall rue the day when they took my wife.”

The sons of Usnach did battle, valiantly killing hundreds; they returned to the house, locked their shields around Deirdra, then sallied forth, killing as they went.

Conor said to his Druid: “Look, if these men escape, they will destroy the Ulster men forever. Play enchantment upon them, and I give you my word, no danger shall be theirs.” The Druid believed him and laid a spell upon the sons of Usnach, a clogging sea of invisible waves, so that they were as swimming though they walked.

No man dared to approach till their arms fell from their hands.

Then they were taken and Conor commanded them to be put to death. No Ulsterman would do his bidding, but at last a Norse captain slew them. The brothers contended as to the time of death, each one desiring to die first that he might not see his brothers slain. But Naisi gave to the Norseman his magic sword, which could cleave all before it, and they knelt down together, and with one blow the Norseman struck off the three heads.

A Book of Hours

Deirdra chanted a lament over them, then threw herself on Naisi, and died.

*Woe to thee, daughter of Phelim, woe to thee,
Deirdra.*

Down below Fair Head there's one of the prettiest bits on the coast, Murlough Bay, and at the cottage Miss Clarke will give you a cup of tea, to rest you.

There's very much that's pleasant in journeying alone, but I remember Bonamargy Friary as one of the places where Cowper's lines came forcibly to mind:

*How sweet, how passing sweet is solitude,
But give me still in my retreat some one whom I
may whisper,
"Solitude is sweet!"*

Sorley Boy, the great MacDonnell chieftain, founded the friary, and he lies buried here. He was the "Yellow Charley" that for many years stoutly resisted Elizabeth, and with a following of red shanks made some brave stands against the Tudors. Sorley Boy had to contend with the English, and with the great shane O'Neill, himself, who wished to be Lord Paramount in

From Lough Neagh to Lough Foyle

the North. I always like to read that when Elizabeth finally sent Sorley Boy his patent as Lord of the Route, he burned the document before his retainers, in Dunluce Castle, swearing that what had been won by the sword should never be kept by the sheepskin; and I always read with sorrow of the day when Sorley Boy, an old man of eighty, did allegiance in Dublin to Queen Elizabeth's portrait.

About two miles from Ballycastle in Glenshesk is a relic of the past, known as Goban Saer's castle and caves. Rath Goban has a long legend attached to it about Goban, but it is less interesting to me than the island opposite Ballycastle. Rathlin, or Rachray, as it is called by the natives, is just the size and shape of Glenshesk, and naturally enough it's believed that 'twas removed from the Glen and put into the sea. It has a rocky shore, in some places four hundred and fifty feet above the sea level; although the nearest point from Fair Head is but three miles, it is not safe to enter any point except Church Bay, which is seven and one half miles from Ballycastle, and you mustn't attempt the journey if the sea be rough; you may have to stay for days in Rachray Island, an experi-

A Book of Hours

ence you would not court. 'Twas here, tradition says, that Robert Bruce learned his lesson of industry from the spider, the seventh trial. Bruce resolved once again to renew his efforts to gain the Scottish crown, and the great victory of Bannockburn followed.

The men on Rachray Island are very handsome, finely developed men physically, but their manners have not softened by contact with civilization.

There's a custom still in vogue in Rachray which may interest you. On the last day of the year, about seven o'clock in the evening, two parties of young men, twenty to thirty in each, set out to pay a visit to every house (except those of the poor, whom they intend to assist), one party taking the upper, the other the lower end of the island. Their approach is indicated by the blowing of a horn, that the inmates may be prepared with whatever offering they choose to give. The first who enters the house has a dried sheepskin fastened onto his shoulders, which is struck with a stick by the one immediately following, keeping time to a rhyme in Irish, which they all repeat, walking around a chair placed in the center of the kitchen. A

From Lough Neagh to Lough Foyle

translation of the words is: "Get up, good woman, and give us a scon; and let it be well buttered, and if you refuse, there will come crows from the back of Knocklayd that will do much harm to your poultry."

After they receive their offering, money, wool, or meal, which they afterwards distribute to the poor, they cut a small piece off the sheepskin, which they give to the mistress of the house as an acknowledgment of her bounty, and as an earnest of good luck for the ensuing year; and they invoke a blessing on the house and its inmates. *Coullin* is the name given to the above ceremony.

Rachray Island has, too, the *Fata Morgana*. Many have seen on the shore a corps of yeomen drilling, and there have been seen numerous ships of French fleet, and when others were called to witness, they had gone, but, perhaps, what has been seen by the most, is the green island which rises every seventh year between Rachray and Bengore. Many have distinctly seen it, adorned with wood, and crowded with people selling yarn, and engaged in occupations of a fair.

They say:

A Book of Hours

If earth or stone

*From verdant Erin's hallowed land
Were on this magic island thrown,
Forever fixed it then would stand.
But when for this some little boat
In silence ventures from the shore,
The mermaid sinks, hushed is the note,
The fairy isle is seen no more.*

This refers to a legend that the enchanted isle comes up upon the playing of music by a mermaid.

There's a little poem about Rachray, by Moira O'Neill, that I like, and many like it in Ireland, too. I've referred to the roughness and strength of the sons of Rachray, and it is quite possible that a girl suddenly won by one of these sons of Rachray might soliloquize thus:

*Och, what was it got me at all that time
To promise I'd marry a Rachray man?
An' now he'll not listen to rason or rhyme,
He's strivin' to hurry me all that he can.*

*"Come on, an' ye be to come on!" says he,
"Ye're bound for the Island, to live wi' me."*

*See Rachray Island beyont in the bay,
An' the dear knows what they be doin' out there
But fishin' an' fightin' an' tearin' away,
An' who's to hindher, an' what do they care?*

From Lough Neagh to Lough Foyle

*The goodness can tell what 'ud happen to me
When Rachray 'ud have me, anee, anee!*

*I might have took Pether from over the hill,
A dacent poacher, the kind poor boy:
Could I keep the ould places about me still,
I'd never set foot out o' sweet Ballyvoy.
My sorra on Rachray, the could sea-caves,
An' blackneck divers, an' weary ould waves!*

*I'll never win back now, whatever may fall,
So give me good luck, for ye'll see me no more;
Sure an Island Man is the mischief an' all—
An' me that never was married before!
Oh, think o' my fate when ye dance at a fair,
In Rachray there's no Christianity there.*

This never failed to please my Irish friends. When I said it over to a girl at Ballycastle, I said, "Where do you suppose she met him?" "At the Lammas Fair, at Ballywoy," came the answer very promptly.

Carrick-a-rede is a name familiar to many. It is a swinging rope bridge eighty feet above the chasm between rock and mainland. Mrs. Hunter sent her daughter and guest in mail car with me, while the son and his guest followed in private jaunting car. I never saw bluer sea than on this fourth day of July that found me by the

A Book of Hours

Moyle. The young people accompanied me to a place from which I was to walk to overtake my coach. On the way, I met a local incident of a sight place. One, two, three, until there were at least a dozen small boys running after me, and most lugubriously calling, droning, "Scramble for a penny, if you want to see some fun. Scramble for a penny, if you want to see some fun." But I had rounded several corners and my car wasn't in sight, I was very warm, cross, and in no way disposed to encourage scrambling for pennies. Then I got the car on to the Causeway—the grand sight.

Now a scientific person could tell you all about the greenstone, basalt, red ochre, feldspar, amygdaloids, and all things other here—but I can't. It's very wonderful and impressive. I'd wished all my life to see the Causeway because it's made up of the stepping-stones that Fin McCool caused to be placed between Ireland and Scotland that his adversary in Scotland might come over and be whipped.

And we come to Dunluce Castle, one of the finest ruins in Europe. There is a Banshee here. A maid who loved contrary to her father's wish, tried to escape on a rope. Both she and lover

From Lough Neagh to Lough Foyle

were drowned. On stormy nights she's heard weeping and wailing in the tiny room known as Banshee's Chamber. We pass Portrush, the fashionable watering place. Near by is Coleraine, famed for lovely Kitty, and 'twas Lysaght's song and the River Bann that allured me here. Then,

*To the edge of Lough Foyle itself—
A Lough hospitable,*

we have come.

SOME IRISH VILLAGES THAT I KNOW

THERE are four villages that I shall try to bring to your eyes this hour, villages contrasting very sharply one with the other. One, a Connaught village, poor, almost beyond your imagining, where "squalor, confused misery and want" abound. Another is a region in Wicklow, perhaps I ought not to style it village, but it is a group of buildings about which is the very atmosphere of old-time romance and mystery, Glendalough, beloved, I am sure, by every one that has seen the spot, sacred to the memory of St. Kevin. Thirdly, there is the village of Cushendall, on Red Bay, in County Antrim, embowered in flowers, the prettiest of villages and rich in folklore, and, lastly, my own homely village in Derry, with hardly a claim to your kind notice. It is not beautiful, it has had no celebration by poets, but it is kindly, and I have an affection for it.

In the getting from one village to another, I

Some Irish Villages That I Know

may tell of things extraneous to the village life, but they will all be things Irish, and will, I hope, help to make a background for the Irish villages.

I am sure that no one will challenge my right to talk on Irish villages when I say that the village I know best of all is one that I don't know at all. It is the village of Lisconnel, in Connemara, which Miss Barlow has made us know so intimately through her "Irish Idylls." Had fortune, with all her fickleness, thrown over me the mantle of story-teller, and had she granted me the further grace to choose what stories I would tell, I should elect to tell stories of the Irish peasant, full of the truth and sympathy that mark Miss Barlow's stories. These stories of the everyday life in the wild bog lands of Connemara, when I first read them, ten years and more ago, strongly impressed me with their truthful picturing of a life in which I am deeply interested, and there has been no reason why I should change my opinion during the years. Lisconnel is a cluster of, perhaps, half a score of huts, cabins in which you would not house brute animals, seven Irish miles from Duffclune, the nearest place that resembles a town. The road

A Book of Hours

winds over the brown, dreary bog land, once in a while brightened by a bit of bog cotton, but it is one of the earth's waste places.

But here in these mud cabins is lived a life which has many of the elements of the greater life outside. Looking at the village, as a whole, it looks like a cluster of hives. The houses are builded of stone and mud, and with no plaster. They can afford very little mud either from the scanty soil, so there is a great deal of unscientific ventilation. Because there is so little tillable soil, they usually select for the house the place most unpromising for a crop. For instance, the Sheridan's house is builded on a ledge, and the elevation in the middle acts as a watershed during a wet season. The cabins are not thatched with straw—that is beyond the means of the dweller in Lisconnel—but with rushes, tied on and weighted down with stones to prevent its blowing off. The largest window in Lisconnel is nine inches square.

Imagine Lisconnel, the dreary waste of brown bog land on every side, a very badly kept road, with depressions full of water in a wet season; as we face Duffclune, the Pat Ryans, the Sheridans, and the Kilfoyles live in cabins on

Some Irish Villages That I Know

the left, and nearly opposite them are the Quigleys, and next beyond, Mad Belle and Big Anne share a hut; on the left, farther up on the bog, are the homes of Oldy Rafferty and Widow McGurk; there's the roofless house where the O'Driscolls used to live, and these, with the homes of the Mich Ryans and the Doynes, name all the houses in Lisconnel.

But here, as I said, you find many of the elements that are found in bigger communities. Here is the Widow McGurk, poor, even relatively poorer than some of the others. But it requires much finesse to get her to accept assistance. It wouldn't do, for example, to come bouncing in as Judy Ryan did one evening, with a pailful of potatoes culled cautiously, though in no grudging mood, from a slender store (if Judy threw back a handful at the last moment, it was not her will that consented), and saying, "Och, sure, Mrs. McGurk, I've heard you're run out o' pertates; why it's starved you must be, woman alive, cliver and clane. Here's an odd few I've brought you in the ould bucket, and there'd be more only we're getting shortish ourselves."

Judy was immediately informed, with a la-

A Book of Hours

mentable disregard of truth, that Mrs. McGurk had more pitatis than she could use in a month of Sundays, and at the same time given to understand, with an impolite absence of circumlocution, that the sooner she removed herself and her ould bucket, the better 'twould be.

Mrs. Kilfoyle, a dear old woman, I think I love her better than anyone else in Lisconnel, had that inestimable quality of tact. In Lisconnel they say, "She had a way wit her." She would go up the rush-tussocked slope to Mrs. McGurk's. She was a light weight, but she was less nimble of foot than of wit, and she would ask to borrow a jug or a mug. Then after a call she would say: "Well, I must be shankin' off wid oneself, Mrs. McGurk, and thank you kindly, ma'am, sure it's troublin' you I am too often."

"Not at all, not at all," and Mrs. McGurk's head rose two inches higher with the consciousness of conferring a favor, "Don't think to mention it, Mrs. Kilfoyle, you're welcome as daylight to any sticks of things I've got."

Then Mrs. Kilfoyle would say: "I suppose now, ma'am, you couldn't be takin' a couple o' stones o' praties off of us? Ours do be keeping

Some Irish Villages That I Know

that badly, we can't use them quick enough, and you could be paying us back when the new ones came in, accordin' as was convenient. If you could, I'd sent one of the childer up with them as soon as I git home. Sorra the trouble in it at all, at all, and thank you kindly, Mrs. McGurk, and good evenin' to you, ma'am." Then trotting down the hill: "I'll bid the lads to be stirring themselves. Niver a bit the cra-tur's after getting this day."

Or it might be: "Good evenin', then, Mrs. McGurk, and I'll be careful with your jug. I was thinking by the way, you maybe wouldn't object to the lads lavin' you up a few creels of turf now our stack's finished buildin', just to keep them quiet, for it's beyond themselves they git entirely, if they're not at some job. They do have their mother distracted with their divilments, the little spalpeens."

But one day the Widow McGurk was raised above these mortifications by a wave of affluence. An unknown kinsman in the United States died, and left a legacy of *fifteen shilling*. The sensation in Lisconnel cannot be described; they discussed the legacy early and late. It was an almost unanimous sentiment that the money was

A Book of Hours

well come by. Mrs. Quigley indulged in a few discouraging remarks about the difficulty there'd be in getting the money order paid. There was much conflicting advice as to what might be done with it. Mrs. McGurk planned a shopping expedition to the town next day, and it was arranged that the Widow Doyne's Stacy was to accompany her, and help her home with her load, which people understood would consist mainly of a heavy meal bag.

Before Mrs. McGurk could start, "she had to make a round of calls upon her acquaintance to inquire whether she could do e'er a thing for them down beyant." This is a long-established social observance, which to omit would have been a great breach of etiquette. There were very few commissions; old Mich Ryan fumbled in his pocket, where there sometimes used to be pennies, but where there were never any now. "Ah, now, fathern, what would you be wantin'," said his daughter-in-law.

"Tobaccy." But nobody found the pennies for the tobaccy.

All that November day the neighbors, when they met, talked about Mrs. McGurk and her expedition, wondering how much Corr would

Some Irish Villages That I Know

charge her a stone for the meal, and when dark came down over the hamlet, all sorts of conjectures were rife as to what could be detaining them, perhaps this, perhaps that, all fraught with more or less danger to the adventurous shoppers, but at last Mrs. McGurk appeared. Her shopping had been done on liberal lines, to judge by the basket, which she set down on the first dyke sufficiently flat-topped. The first parcel that came out was the cause of the expedition's late return. Mrs. McGurk had accidentally left the tobacco for Mich Ryan on a counter, and had not missed it till she was a long mile and a half on her way home, so she trudged the dreary way back that the old man might not be disappointed, and happy it was for old Mich that she had been so kind. He had been waiting expectant all day. When his daughter Biddy offered to fetch him down his little old black pipe, he said, "No, I'll just be keeping the feel of it in my hand to-night."

There were other delights in the basket, sugar-sticks for the children; and it was on this occasion that a reconciliation was cemented between Mrs. McGurk and Judy Ryan, cemented by the sugar-sticks bestowed on the youthful Pat

A Book of Hours

Ryan. There was a large blue bottle with a red-and-yellow label, which contained a liniment warranted to cure the very worst of rheumatics. This was to be divided between Mrs. Quigley and Peter Sheridan. There was a coarse, warm woolen skirt for Stacy, knitting yarn for Peg Sheridan, who was lame and lost "widout a bit of work in her hand." But what gave the greatest pleasure was a pound of tea and four of sugar which she bestowed on dear old Mrs. Kilfoyle, who sat with the parcels in her lap, exclaiming, "Musha, then, well to goodness, sure, woman, dear, oh, now begruah, why, what at, why what at all?"

For herself, Mrs. McGurk had bought a pen-'orth of salt. She decided that "meal was mere brash, and a hot pitati's a dale tastier any day." But I've not done half justice in this poor telling to the generosity of Mrs. McGurk and the gratitude of her beneficiaries.

I should like to tell you of old Mrs. Kilfoyle, something about her when she was pretty Bessie Joyce, and her family came as strangers to Lisconnel from a tidy little farm in County Clare. Her father, Andy Joyce, had a predilection for seeing things decent and in order, and he so

Some Irish Villages That I Know

improved his little farm that the landlord turned him out, and appropriated the improvements to his own use.

And were there time, I should like to give you a glimpse of Lisconnel on a wet day in July, when all the potatoes are *done*, and the village is fasting except for the coarse yellow Indian meal, "brash." What wonder that their tempers are a bit worn, and that Mrs. Quigley and Mrs. Brian Kilfoyle, the daughter-in-law of my old friend, were at crisscross.

"Mrs. Brian, Mrs. Brian, Mrs. Brian, ma'am," Mrs. Quigley called out, very audibly exasperated, "I'll trouble you, ma'am, to speak to your Tim there. He's just after slapping a big sod o' turf over the dyke into the middle of me chickens, that went as nare doing slaughter on the half of them as ever I saw. The cratur was that terrified, I give you me word, they lep up ten feet standin' off of the ground."

"Tim," called Mrs. Kilfoyle, "you'll sup sorrow wid a spoon of grief if I hear of your doin' anythin' agin to Mrs. Quigley's chuckens." There the incident would have ended amicably, had not Mrs. Quigley remarked, to nobody in particular, "Begob, it's a quare way some peo-

A Book of Hours

ple have of bringing up their childer to mischievous little pests."

Then the quarrel began in full force. Mrs. Quigley had to stand out in the wet, so she had really the worst of it, as Mrs. Brian could fling her shots from her own house. The sharpness of the contention may be inferred from the fact that when routed by a heavier downpour, she scudded off toward her own dwelling, the last utterance which she gave the wet winds was, "May the divil sail away wid the half of yours," and the next blast bore the antiphonal response, "And may he sail away wid *you, too*, ma'am."

I could talk to you an entire hour of the joys and sorrows, the tragedies that come to the people of Lisconnel, but Glendalough, the "garden of Ireland," calls.

It was from Dublin that I took the journey to Glendalough, partly by train and partly by jaunting car. A very pretty journey was this to Rathdrum, skirting the coast for many miles; we had fine views of Dublin Bay.

O Bay of Dublin, my heart you're troublin'.

Arrived at Rathdrum, a long, long jaunting-car ride takes one to Glendalough, to me a place

Some Irish Villages That I Know

of absolute enchantment. When I returned from my first visit to Ireland, I was asked many times, "What did you like best?" I answered truly when I said, "I would sooner give over all memories rather than forget Glendalough."

Thackeray, who went laughing through Ireland, saw many things with the humorist's eye, but he was serious enough at Glendalough. This is what he says: "I think the Irish scenery just like the Irish melodies—sweet, mild, and sad, even in sunshine. You can neither represent one nor the other by words"—and that I know too sadly well of Glendalough. Glendalough is made up of little churches, seven in all, of a Round Tower and a very ancient old cross. This combination is one of the many delightful bits in Glendalough, it has two lakes—"valley of the two lakes" is what the name means—and it has mountains and streams; the tiny churches are beautifully softened by time, and ivy-grown; romance and antiquity abide here. "Multitudinous Glendalough, the Rome of the western world," are the terms used by one who described it in the year 800.

St. Kevin, the founder of the seven churches of Glendalough, was descended from royal fam-

A Book of Hours

ily patrimony, not far away from Rathdrum. The date of his birth is not known; he died in 618. Shortly after his ordination as a priest he withdrew to Glendalough; here he dwelt seven years as a hermit. "On the northern shore of the lake, he dwelt in a hollow tree, on the southern shore in a very narrow cave, to which there was no access but by boat; a perpendicular rock overhangs it from above." A shepherd discovered his retreat here, and soon thousands came to visit him. They built him an oratory which soon became too small; then at the bidding of the angel, erected the monastery of the valley of the two lakes. There is an endless legend regarding St. Kevin. The one most constantly connected with him is that when he fled from the world he was followed by a beautiful maid, Kathleen. Her love for him must have been most unselfish. She loved him so devotedly that she begged to be permitted not even to live in sight of him, but "to look upon his shadow, to hear not even his voice, but its echo, promising at the same time that she would lie like a dog at his feet, take penance for his sins, as well as her own, and even in prayer forget her own soul for the good of his." An account found in

Some Irish Villages That I Know

the authentic life of the saint says that he scourged the forward young person with nettles. Kathleen really seems the most admirable of the two; you all know that when she followed St. Kevin across the lake to the cell, he pushed her off the rock into the water.

A prettier legend is that once when St. Kevin put his hand through the opening of the cell, a blackbird dropped her eggs into it, and St. Kevin never stirred hand or arm till the eggs were hatched. There is another story that once when King Branduff was hunting the boar, he found the saint praying, while a crowd of tame birds sang on his shoulders and hands. Legends like these are of interest, because they explain the bird's, which, in religious symbolism, give one of his attributes.

Moore's poem which tells the legend begins:

*By that lake whose gloomy shore
Skylark never warbles o'er;*

and it has been accepted as a reason that the tragedy of Kathleen's death was followed by a larkless condition, but larks are always more wont to carol over meadows and fields than a lake in a rocky dell. But here is another reason

A Book of Hours

why, it is said, the skylark does not warble over Glendalough. When the seven churches were building, the skylarks used to call the men to their work every morning; the song of the lark was a signal for them to begin labor. When work was at an end St. Kevin declared that no other lark was worthy to succeed those pious birds who had helped in the building of the churches.

So leave legends, for a little, but one can't leave legends for long in Glendalough; let us see what's to be seen. An ancient gateway leads one to the cluster of churches, crosses, and Round Tower. This Round Tower is presumably of the tenth century. Backed by the green hills, its position is striking. St. Kevin's kitchen is so called because the people believed for a long time that the belfry was a chimney. Petrie, the learned antiquarian and archæologist, says there is no reason to doubt that this served St. Kevin for house and oratory, and that his successors added the belfry; that would fix the date of the building in the early seventh century.

I had succeeded in getting to St. Kevin's kitchen without a guide, though there were plenty enough who had offered their services.

Some Irish Villages That I Know

But an old man opened it to my friends and me, and told us the most delightfully extravagant tales. At last he said, "Where do you live, when you're at home?" "In America." "Oh, God bless ye! Come in here." So he let us into the sacristy, and lifting up a slab, he gave us some bits of shale. "There now, ye'll never be shipwrecked and ye'll never have the toothache." I bestowed my pieces upon an Irish friend, who will, I trust, enjoy, in consequence, immunity from those widely divergent evils. The old fellow told such delightful yarns that I gave him a fee entirely disproportionate to the service he had rendered us, and as each of my friends gave him something, he saw that it wasn't an empty purse, or unwillingness to pay, that had kept us from having a guide, and his curiosity was excited. He called me back as we left the little oratory and asked, "Why didn't yes take a guide?" But if ever you go to Glendalough, and want a guide, let me entreat you to ask for Jack Barrett. Thackeray says that although his guide wore a ragged coat he had the manners of a gentleman. Jack Barrett couldn't have guided Thackeray in 1842, but he has the manners of a gentleman. Later in

A Book of Hours

the day we were trying to find St. Rhefert's and had taken the wrong path. A voice called, "Ladies, that's the wrong path; ye might wander about all night; come back this way to the stile." He helped us over the stile, then proffered his services as guide, spoke of his qualifications, and the eminent men he had shown about. "But," I said, "we don't question your great acquaintance with all these things, but we thought we'd enjoy going alone." "Then I'll not afflict myself upon you further," he said, and with a very courtly wave of the hat he was gone, after giving us direction how to find St. Rhefert's Church, and, subsequently, the lake.

St. Rhefert's Church, the burial place of the O'Toole's and, according to tradition, of St. Kevin himself, is charming. We came at last to the lake and employed a boatman to take us over to St. Kevin's bed. Our boatman told us that no lady can be drowned on the lake, for so St. Kevin prayed after the death of Kathleen.

But to leave Glendalough without mentioning King O'Toole would be to leave it most incomplete. He was *not* a contemporary of St. Kevin, although legend associated them together. When King O'Toole had become an

Some Irish Villages That I Know

old man, one of his chief amusements was to watch his geese swim, and he had one old gander that used to dive down into the lake on Friday and bring him up a fish for his dinner. 'Twas a great grief when the bird became too old to fly. He met St. Kevin one day, and told him of his sorrow. The saint asked, "What will you give me if I make him fly for you again?" "Why, all the land he flies over, even supposing he flies over the whole glen." With great exactness, he did fly over the entire glen, and King O'Toole put a handsome face on it, made over the entire valley forever and a day to the saint. All this nonsense is put into a very rollicking song, which I dare say you may have heard sung. But I wish you might hear it sung in the rich, pleasant voice of one of my Irish friends. The saintly and royal dialogists are made to talk in a very free and easy way, and more than once the merry song has beguiled the way when I've been questing for folklore, not in Leinster, but in Ulster.

And having given you a glimpse of a village in Connaught, and a peep at a nook in Leinster, I shall now while you away to a region in Ulster, and I am fancying that we have the magic

A Book of Hours

steed, Bohalaun, who can convey us in a minute from the glen in County Wicklow to the region of glens in County Antrim.

Bohalaun will take us first to Glenoe, an out-of-the-way little place where few enough tourists go, but here's where they used to say, "the grace for light," then from Glenoe he will take us to Larne, and along the Antrim Coast Road. Over this fine road he will fly, and his silver hoofs will leave scarcely a shining mark. As we fly on, we shall catch glimpses of the bluest of seas on our right; it is the Moyle, the name given to the Northern Channel between Ireland and Scotland; its blueness is something that we cannot fail to remark, although Bohalaun is going at such a tremendous pace, outpacing the very wind.

The village to which we are hastening is Cushendall, which name means "foot of the Dall," and it is at the foot of the Dall River; it is also on the Red Bay, and is guarded by the mountains, Lurigethan and Trostan. A branch of the Gulf Stream enters Red Bay and sensibly tempers the climate, so that roses and fuchsias grow luxuriously; then this is the entrance to the Glen Region, the Seven Glens of Antrim,

Some Irish Villages That I Know

and it was at Cushendall where dwelt McMartin, the Lord of the Seven Glens, and I shall like to tell you how he came to be Lord of the Seven Glens. His court used to be on a fairy rath, to which we will go, and as we go I will tell you about McMartin. He was but a poor fisherman, when one day he saw, just off the shore from Cushendall, a beautiful ship, its prow of gold, and its sails of purple, while on the deck was a man reading a wondrous book. McMartin did not know it, but the man was a magician. McMartin was standing on a rock, and the man called to him. The portion of rock on which McMartin stood detached itself from the main rock, and was turned into a silver boat which sailed over the waves to the astrologer.

“McMartin,” said he, “it’s written that I must take a wife from this place; go you to the village and bring her to me.”

Then McMartin hastened to his own home, and took his own wife, a very pretty young woman, but a vixen most pronounced. His conscience troubled him a little, but he soothed it by saying that she’d be much better off than he a poor fisherman could ever make her, and off he went

A Book of Hours

with her to the magician; but when the magician saw him coming, he called out, "McMartin, I don't want her, we've shrews enough in our country without her," and off he sailed, but first threw into the boat a big bag of gold. When the little silver boat reached the rock, it became a part of the rock again, and McMartin feared for the gold, but it remained, and with it he purchased the Seven Glens and became Lord over them.

Now you know how the Seven Glens came into McMartin's possession, perhaps you would like to go to one or two of them, as they are among the chasms of Cushendall, and the one most frequently visited is Glen a-uff, beautiful with its waterfalls of various shapes and heights, and hazels, and larches, and ferns.

Another glen, not so picturesque, nor so much visited, I love better, and that is Glen Dun. "Lone Glen Dun and the wild glen flowers" is very sweet to me.

Up in Glen Dun, in the cleft root of an oak is an old altar; it is an old runic stone; the inscription is indecipherable. Here for years was the worshiping place of the Roman Catholics of this region, until a benevolent gentle-

Some Irish Villages That I Know

man gave them a chapel. But they still come here for missions, and when I was there several years ago, the place had not the bare look that its picture shows; the trees and shrubs were in leaf and blossom and there were garlands hung about, and the way to the altar was strewn with moss.

It does not seem inappropriate that in Glen Dun I should say to you a song of Glen Dun, written by the sweet songstress of this glen region, Moira O'Neill. Her Irish home is not three miles away; she has made this region happier for me by her singing, and I am deeply in her debt for the songs which interpret so truthfully the life and scenes of this part of Ireland. She has with her poetry done for the Glens of Antrim what Jane Barlow's tales have done for Connemara.

*Sure this is blessed Erin an' this the same glen,
The gold is on the whin-bush,
The watcher sings again,
The Fairy Thorn's in flower—an' what ails my
heart then?*

*Flower o' the May,
Flower o' the May,
What about the Maytime, an' he far away!*

A Book of Hours

*Summer loves the green glen,
The white bird loves the sea,
An' the wind must kiss the heather top, an' the
 red bell hides a bee;
As the bee is dear to the honey-flower, so one is
 dear to me.*

*Flowers o' the rose,
Flowers o' the rose,
A thorn pricked me one day, but nobody knows.*

*The bracken up the braeside has rusted in the
 air,
Three birches lean together, so silver-limbed an'
 fair.
Och, golden leaves are flying fast, but the scar-
 let wan is rare.*

*Berry o' the roan,
Berry o' the roan,
The wind sighs among the trees, but I sigh alone.*

*I knit beside the turf fire, I spin upon the wheel,
Winter nights for thinkin' long,
Round runs the reel.
But he never knew, he never knew that here for
 him I kneel.*

*Sparkle o' the fire,
Sparkle o' the fire,
Mother Mary, keep my love, an' send me my
 desire.*

Some Irish Villages That I Know

Moira O'Neill's Irish home used to be at the Cushendun, the sister village of Cushendall, but at the time that I was exploring the glens and singing her songs, and saying them in cabins to the peasants, she was far, far away in the Northwest, in the Canadian Rockies. She married a young man who wished to try ranching in the far West.

*Och, what's this is deeper than the sea?
An' what's this is stronger nor the sea?
Where the call is "all or none"
An' the answer "all for one"
Then we be to sail away across the sea.
Lone Glen Dun an' the wild glen flowers,
Little ye know if the prairie is sweet.
Roses for miles and redder than ours,
Spring here undher the horses' feet;
Ay, an' the black-eyed gold sun-flowers,
Not as the glen flowers, small an' sweet.
Wathers o' Moyle, I hear ye callin'
Clearer for half o' the world between,
Antrim hills an' the wet rain fallin'
Whiles ye are nearer than snow-tops here:
Dreams o' the night an' a night wind callin'—
What is the half o' the world between?*

Years ago, when I was first under the spell of her charming verses, I wrote to Moira

A Book of Hours

O'Neill expressing my delight in her glen poems, and I spoke of myself apologetically as an obtrusive stranger. After much traveling of our letters, for we were half the world away from each other, there came a reply from Moira O'Neill which began delightfully, "My dear obtrusive stranger, I wish there were more of you."

With its flowers; its glens, its mountain and sea, and its stories and songs, Cushendall is an ideal place for a prolonged tarry, and I am always looking forward to the time when I may tarry here for a season at least. But if I wait too long before I take you to my own home, you will put it down to inhospitality and a lack of desire to entertain you, and I shall bid you come at once.

I shall not take Bohalaun as the medium for traveling; he goes too swiftly, and we should miss much that is interesting, as Bohalaun would prance from Cushendall to my village; it is not more than fifty or sixty miles, but I shall take you around the Antrim Coast, past Bally-castle and Glenshesh, the famous swinging bridge at Carrich-a-rede, by the Giant's Causeway with its remarkable basaltic columns, to Portrush,

Some Irish Villages That I Know

thence to Coleraine, and then to our market town, Magherafret. In all probability, we shall have missed one of the two trains that go daily to my village, so we shall go over by jaunting car, and as we drive, I will tell you of the irregularity of our railway service—I have yet to know why they call the afternoon train “the quarter past four train”—it leaves at ten minutes to five. The station master has, as you may imagine, little enough to do in this out-of-the-way place, but he holds his office in high esteem. One day last spring, a vain hope to find a general time-table took me over to the little station, and I greeted Mr. Bell cordially, “How are you, Mr. Bell?” “How do you do?” Mr. Bell returned, “your tongue I know, but your face and name are strange.” “I am Miss Thompson. I was here a long time some years ago.” “Not Miss Thompson out of America?” “Yes.” “Shake hands again.” Then to make talk, I said, “I am very sorry you didn’t remember me, Mr. Bell, you were one of the first persons for whom I inquired.” Then indeed did I feel my inconsequence, when Mr. Bell said grandly, “Although we were fast friends, we didn’t get speaking much together,

A Book of Hours

and what with this public life and all the bustle and stir, I can't be remembering everybody."

Now here, in this village, I am at home in every corner, and almost by every fire. When I come in from a round, and am asked where I've been, it is very likely I'll say, "I climbed to Mitchell's forth, then went by M'Kevoon's loaming, crossed Sally's fort stick over the burn, and came home by Barclay's meadow." "And did you get seeing anyone?" "I met the McGeehan's ones and had a 'crack' with Mary Hagan."

It is in a house like this, a two-cornered thatched-roofed house, that I live with Maryanne and Rose, in whom some of my friends are most kindly interested. Here we sit by the peat fire, here the neighbors come on their kail-yee—which is an evening visit.

After the friends are gone, Rose will inquire, "Had you good crack the night?" And I usually answer, "Och, the best." Any captious remarks are not encouraged, because I remember once when I said, referring to a man who usually talks well, "Francis was very bad crack the night," Rose remarked, "You're not always

Some Irish Villages That I Know

good crack yourself." The justice of the rebuke I was not slow to grant.

As I stand in the half-door, and look across to County Antrim, Slemish Mountain is conspicuous, and it is simply in following the rigid etiquette of the village that I remark on Slemish, "Slemish is clear to-day," or "Slemish has a cap on to-day." We have a mountain of our own, Slieve Gallion, but we cannot see it from either of our two windows.

To the casual comer to Curr, it seems a prosaic enough village, but I know where the fairy raths are, and where Reuben's Glen is. Reuben was the man that could lay devils, and he lived in a beautiful glen; I know where Callan Mor's grave is on the side of Slieve Gallion, and I can show you the place where the giant queen over in Antrim had her workmen begin digging among the mountain so that she could see across to her grand friend in County Donegal; but the workmen all took a sore in their fingers, and the work stopped. I can show you where Betsey Stewart used to live. She was a woman that could blink, she could charm the cows so that they wouldn't give milk, and she could turn herself into a hare, and once when she had the hare

A Book of Hours

shape on her, James Woodhouse shot her, and we know he shot her that night, because when she went into the house with the woman shape on her, she limped, and she limped ever after.

There is much wisdom that may be learned before a peat fire. Here's the cutting of peat, and may I tell you while we sit before the pleasant turf fire which is so bright and warm, how it came about that the peasants burn peat? It must be remembered that one of the theories to account for fairies is that they are fallen angels. Before the days of St. Patrick, the only fuel the Irish had was wood. St. Patrick's servant was one day returning home, and he met a little man in red. "If you will ask St. Patrick something, I will tell you something in return," said the little man. Next morning at Mass, at the Elevation, for the celebrant must answer any question put to him at that time, the servant called out that he had something to ask. "What wretched man called out?" The servant put the question that the little man in red had asked: "Had fallen angels any chance of salvation?" "You must go dig your grave," said St. Patrick, "because when he hears the answer, he will kill you. Don't forget to lay log and shovel

Some Irish Villages That I Know

crosswise over the grave when you're done:
There is no hope for fallen angels!"

The servant dug his grave, and lay the log and shovel crosswise, as directed, and then the little man in red appeared. When he heard the answer, he tried to get at the servant, who was protected by the cross, and then the fairy said: "Well, I must keep my word. Go to your bog, throw up some turf. Let it dry in the sun, it will make good fire for you." The little red man disappeared. The servant got out of the grave and told to St. Patrick what the fairy said. They tried the turf and have been using it ever since. It is pleasant as one enjoys the warmth and cheer of the turf fire to think we are indebted to a fairy for the comfort.

The talk of my friends in Curr is on all kinds of subjects. I like to hear Dan, a handsome boy of twenty, talk of flowers and birds, both of which he loves from the very gentleness of his nature. "All the birds in the world come round my house," he says. "Last night I dreamed that my room was full of birds, and the dream was true, for when I waked they were all singing about my house."

I can give you some, indeed, I can give you

A Book of Hours

many instances of poetic idiom among my friends, but they do not all talk poetically. When Sarah McWilliams came to invite me to dine with her, this was the form which her invitation took: "I cut the head off a hen last night, and I hope you'll come over to-morrow" —which I rightly interpreted as an invitation to dinner. Meg Barclay's speech is extremely racy of the soil, Meg is most unpoetic. I remember once when ever so many of us were sitting on the ditch, which I have always to remind my hearers is a bank, one glorious June evening when the mountains were beautiful, that Meg, entirely oblivious of all the beauty, began to tell us what fine "crack" a man was whom chance had brought to her father's house the night before. "He was telling us about the cuttin'-up of ould Mis' Palmer." Now it must not for a moment be supposed that old Mis' Palmer had been guilty of any indiscretion which Meg denominated "a cuttin'-up." It was, rather, an autopsy, the harrowing details of which I will spare you, but my medical friends beg me again and again to tell them of the cuttin'-up of ould Mis' Palmer.

Now that it is all over, and happily over, I

Some Irish Villages That I Know

can tell you of a slight misadventure that came to me in the days of last spring. I was so careless as to lose my rings. After vain searching for them, my peasant friends were incredulous. I couldn't have lost them *all*—one might go, but all! I had put them away and searching would not reveal them. I looked, and so did they, but no amount of searching discovered the rings. While I tried to act as usual, I was depressed. I forbade my entertainers mentioning the loss. After the first anxious search, and their uttering of, "How lamentable!" and sundry exclamations, they had *appeared* to put it from their minds, and obeyed to the letter my command that the subject was never to be named. One evening I said, "Maryanne, will you still, when you're sweeping, think about my rings?" And Maryanne turned about swiftly, with the tears flashing in her eyes: "There's never a moment when I'm not thinking of them. How my heart aches! It was the other night that I sent a request to St. Anthony, and if he doesn't restore them I don't know what else to do." My own belief was that they had somehow fallen on to the earth floor of my room, been swept into the kitchen, and that the ducks, chickens, and other

A Book of Hours

birds had swallowed my diamonds and pearls. It is now extremely funny as I recall how bitterly I quoted over and over again, "Irks care the full-cropped bird?" as I looked at the fowl.

One day, just a week after their loss, I found them, exactly where I had put them. With them, I rushed to Maryanne in the kitchen. "See!" I exclaimed. "It's never your rings!" she cried out, and then she rushed out to tell the others. "She's found the rings! She's found her rings!" Such prayerfulness I've never heard as the old mother's, "Thanks be to God; praise the Father!" and Rose's exclaiming, "St. Anthony is good. It's miraculous!"

For a week my poor friends were miserable through my own carelessness, but never a word was said, and many might have been said about reproving me. When I had left them Rose wrote about the matter: "Indeed you did more than well, you had good patience and was pleasant with us, and it was hard on you, for we were everyone black at the heart about them. And beside the loss it was I always thought you'd look back to Ireland with a frown, now I know you'll look back with a smile."

The leaving these dear friends of mine is

Some Irish Villages That I Know

always sad. Rose was weeping copiously, and I could only comfort her by saying: "Remember, I'm coming back to have a donkey car and ride all over Ireland in it." Hugh Patrick McNally is a little boy of five whose ambition is to grow big enough to be my donkey boy. He bestowed on me a lock of his very fair hair; the shop-keeper, Mary Higgins, gave me oranges and biscuits. The Dummy—did I know her name I would not so designate the deaf and dumb woman that came to the station bringing me a shamrock. Poor woman, poorer than you can conceive, "livin' her lone" in a cabin not far from mine, she brought me a poetic gift at parting. Everybody brought me something; very humbly they presented the things, proffering them through Rose, asking her first if she thought I'd take offense.

Now I will close with "Back to Ireland," by Moira O'Neill, a song which my Irish friends liked best of all I read to them.

*Oh, tell me, will I ever win to Ireland again,
Astore! from the far North-West?
Have we given all the rainbows, an' green woods
an' rain,
For the suns an' the snows o' the West?*

A Book of Hours

*"Them that goes to Ireland must thravel night
an' day,
An' them that goes to Ireland must sail across
the say,
For the len'th of here to Ireland is half the
world away—
An' you'll lave your heart behind you in the
West.
Set your face for Ireland,
Kiss your friends in Ireland,
But lave your heart behind you in the West."*

*On a dim an' shiny mornin' the ship she comes
to land,
Early, oh, early in the mornin',
The silver wathers o' the Foyle go slidin' to the
strand,
Whisperin', "Ye're welcome in the mornin'."
There's darkness on the holy hills I know are
close aroun',
But the stars are shinin' up the sky, the stars are
shinin' down,
They make a golden cross above, they make a
golden crown,
An' meself could tell ye why—in the mornin'.
Sure an' this is Ireland,
Thank God for Ireland!
I'm comin' back to Ireland the mornin'.*



MON 1 1908



LIBRARY OF CONGRESS



0 018 395 421 0